

Chapter Two

Land Use Plan

2.1 Overview of Land Use Plan

2.1.1 Community Vision Statement

The Rancho Los Lagos Specific Plan is envisioned as a balanced, walkable community of diverse residential neighborhoods supported by a commercial and mixed use commercial center, employment land uses, elementary schools, and an executive 18-hole golf course all linked by an extensive park and paseo (enhanced walkway) system (**Figure 2-1**). The Plan area is inspired by the interrelated themes of community, recreation, and amenity.

2.1.2 Land Use Plan and Components

The Rancho Los Lagos Specific Plan (Plan) is a 1,076-acre± mixed use, walkable community. The Plan is comprised of four main components, **the conventional residential area, the active adult residential area, the golf course, and the business park**. Within these major areas are other uses including commercial, retail, mixed use, parks and schools. Each component may be developed independently from one another over several years based upon market conditions, and may be developed over several phases with associated infrastructure and community facilities provided concurrently.

Land uses proposed in the Plan area are listed in **Table 2-1** and described in the following text:

Table 2-1
Land Use Summary

Land Use	Approx. Gross Acres	% of Total Area	Dwelling Units (DU)
<i>Single-Family Residential</i>¹			
Low Density Single-Family ²	191	17.7	884
Medium Density Single-Family ³	132	12.3	991
Single-Family Subtotal	323	30.0	1,875
<i>Multi-family Residential</i>⁴			
High Density Multi-family ⁵ (12-24 du/ac)	63	5.9	1,016
Multi-family Subtotal	63	5.9	1,016
<i>Active Adult (or Conventional) Gated Community Residential</i>			
Low Density Single-Family	77	7.2	429
Medium Density Single-Family	77	7.1	510
Gated Community Subtotal	154	14.3	939
RESIDENTIAL SUBTOTAL	540	50.2	3,830
<i>Non Residential Uses</i>			
Business Park	97	9.0	--
Infrastructure Streets and IID Easements	85	7.9	--
Commercial Mixed Use (including potential Fire Station Site)	9	0.8	--
Commercial	3	0.3	--
Specialty Commercial at Community Park	(3 ac included in Community Park acreage)		
Elementary Schools	24	2.2	--
Non Residential Uses Subtotal	218	20.2	--
<i>Open Space/Recreation</i>			
Parks (including lakes)	71	6.6	--
Open Space /Buffers	96	8.9	--
Executive Golf Course (including lakes)	139	12.9	--
Active Adult (or Conventional) Gated Community HOA Recreation Complex	12	1.1	--
Open Space/Recreation Subtotal	318	29.6	--
GRAND TOTAL	1,076	100.0	3,830

¹Single-Family Residential refers to single-family detached DU as well as duplexes.

²Low Density Single-Family refers to detached single-family DU on lots 5,000 square feet and larger.

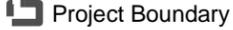
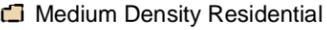
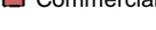
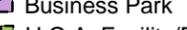
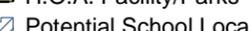
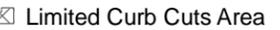
³Medium Density Single-Family refers to A) Detached single-family DU on lots ranging in size from 3,500 to 4,999 square feet; B) Cluster DU (4 to 6 single-family detached DU sharing a common private driveway with individual lots ranging in size from 2,900 to 4,999 square feet); and C) Duplex DU (two attached single-family DU that share a common wall) on lots ranging in size from 3,200 to 4,999 square feet. (One unit per lot).

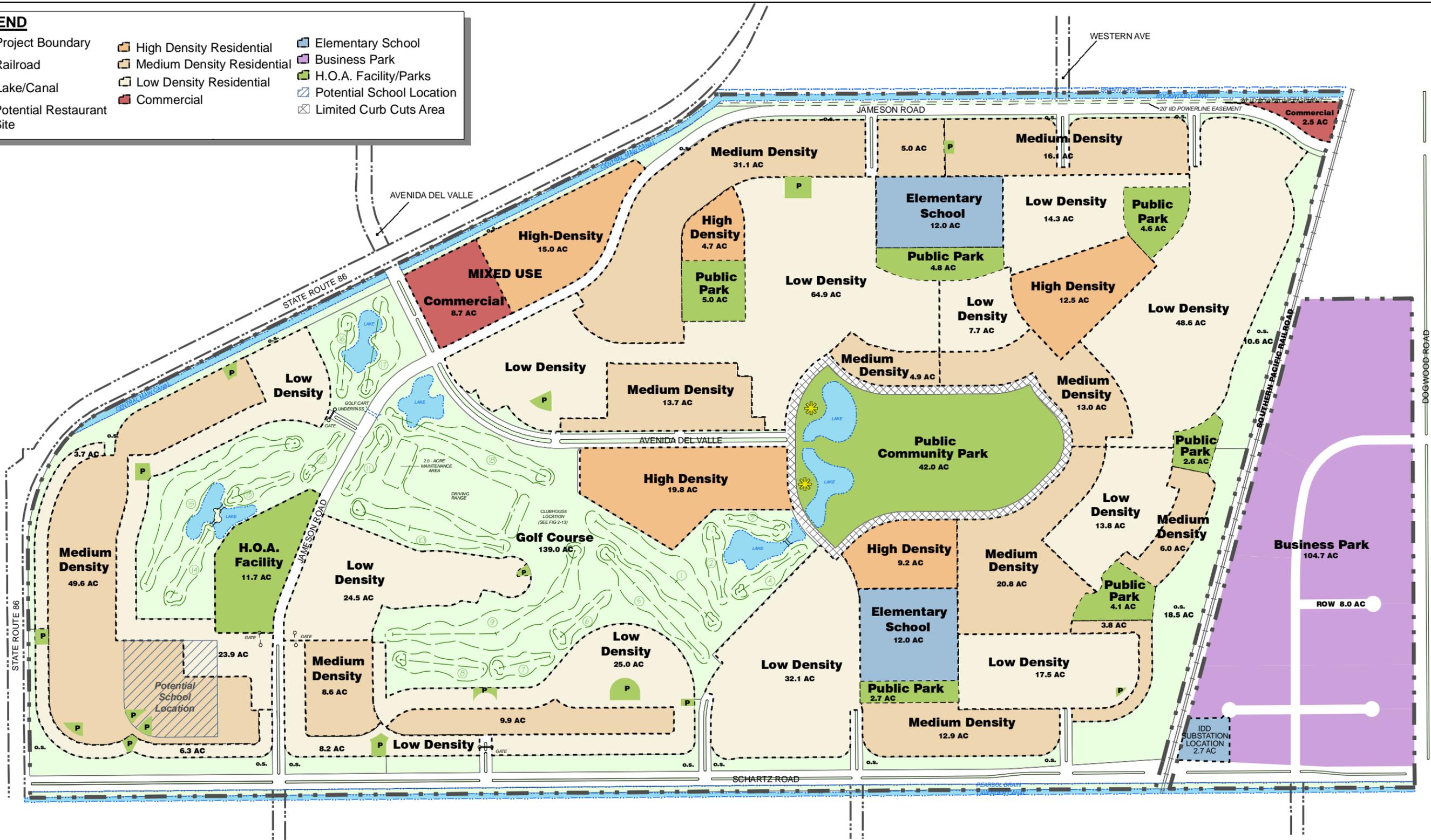
⁴Multi-family Residential refers to both attached (3 to 6 attached dwelling units sharing a common wall) and multi-family (multiple units stacked vertically) dwelling units.

⁵High Density Multi-Family refers to both attached and multi-family DU with a density in the range of 12-24 du per acre.

Source: EDAW, 2006

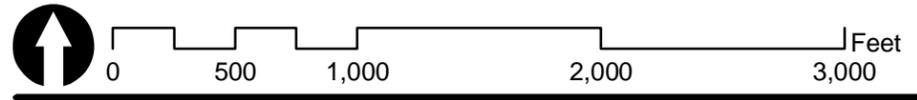
LEGEND

-  Project Boundary
-  Railroad
-  Lake/Canal
-  Potential Restaurant Site
-  High Density Residential
-  Medium Density Residential
-  Low Density Residential
-  Commercial
-  Elementary School
-  Business Park
-  H.O.A. Facility/Parks
-  Potential School Location
-  Limited Curb Cuts Area



Gross acreage indicated includes local streets.

Source: P&D Consultants in conjunction with EDAW, 2007; 2008; 2009



P&D Consultants/EDAW

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County of Imperial

Figure 2-1
Specific Plan Map

Rancho Los Lagos

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- ❖ A community of residential neighborhoods composed of multiple housing types, sizes, and densities to provide housing opportunities that will satisfy the region's diverse housing needs, including: detached single-family homes and multi-family units;
- ❖ A gated, active adult residential community featuring residential neighborhoods comprised of detached and attached single-family homes for residents age 55 years and over; or, if market conditions preclude the development of an active adult component, a gated, conventional (non-age restricted) residential neighborhood may be developed instead;
- ❖ A commercial center providing such uses as a gas/service station and convenience store;
- ❖ A commercial/multi-family mixed use area composed primarily of neighborhood-serving retail uses and apartments. Strong pedestrian connections are intended to link the commercial and residential land uses within this mixed use area. Opportunities for vertical mixed use development such as offices or residential apartments above ground floor retail uses are also allowed;
- ❖ A hierarchy of parks and recreation facilities including the large community park, six neighborhood parks, and approximately 14 mini-parks as well an executive, 18-hole public golf course and a private Home Owners Association (HOA) facility within the active adult community to provide opportunities for passive and active recreation as well as social interaction;
- ❖ An extensive, interconnected system of pedestrian paseos, sidewalks, and bike routes to provide non-motorized links between residential areas and multiple community amenities;
- ❖ Two elementary schools to serve the educational needs of children in the community and surrounding areas; with after hours, outdoor recreation facilities available to members of the community;
- ❖ Cultural uses such as religious and community facilities, a fire station, and other public facilities allowed on several sites throughout the Specific Plan area to serve the needs of residents and neighbors;
- ❖ A business park to provide needed employment opportunities and land for local economic activities;
- ❖ A potential wastewater treatment plant and electrical substation to provide needed infrastructure in support of the community's long-term development and viability; and
- ❖ Potential restaurant and specialty retail use locations are adjacent to the community park to add to the vitality of this central community amenity.

- ❖ Landscaped detention basins and open space buffers that are designed to accommodate stormwater runoff and buffer the residential areas from off-site traffic and railroad noise impacts.

The residential neighborhoods are composed of varied housing types, sizes, and densities to provide housing opportunities for diverse groups with different housing needs. In addition, an active adult community composed of detached and attached single-family units provides a secure, yet active living environment for economically diverse groups of age-qualified residents age 55 years and over in close proximity to high quality amenities and services.

The design of both the conventional residential neighborhood and active adult community features narrow front yard setbacks and dwellings with porches oriented toward the street to create comfortable streetscapes that encourage pedestrian activity, passive visual surveillance, and social interaction. The neighborhood layouts also encourage pedestrian circulation by using short residential blocks and open-ended cul-de-sacs that provide safe pedestrian crossing points.

All streets have a sidewalk or paseo on each side of the street, as part of an extensive system of pedestrian sidewalks, paseos and bicycle paths. The extensive walkway system unifies the Plan area's individual land uses and community amenities into a cohesive community. The interconnected system of streets is designed to disperse traffic efficiently thus reducing the need for excessively wide and dangerous high speed collector roads. The hierarchy of streets provides for easy navigation through the neighborhoods to the central community park. The roadways also include street trees that shade the sidewalks and paseos creating a comfortable spatial scale to further encourage pedestrian activity.

The range of amenities that complement the residential areas encourages recreation and positive social interaction. The neighborhoods and supporting uses are carefully designed in relation to the extensive system of parks. The large community park with a 5-acre water feature (lake) is centrally-located to provide the Plan area with a distinct identifying element as well as an enjoyable recreational and visual amenity. Neighborhood and mini-parks are also strategically located to ensure that nearly all residential dwelling units are located within a three to five minute walk of an open space area or recreational facility that provides for passive and/or active recreation. This feature of easy accessibility to open space for all residents is paramount to the uniqueness and success of this Plan. It is particularly important to provide convenient public open space in or adjacent to small lot residential areas which typically contain more modest private open space areas than larger lot areas.

The gated active adult community is developed around a centrally located private HOA facility adjacent to the executive golf course. A series of mini-parks place open space and views into the golf course within walking distance of all residents. The golf course is

designed to provide the active adult community and also the entire Plan area with an impressive visual amenity. Several lakes are provided as additional design features to further celebrate the Plan area's identity as "Rancho Los Lagos" (a Spanish phrase meaning "Ranch of the Lakes").

If market conditions preclude the development of an active adult component in the Plan area, then a gated, conventional (non-age restricted) residential neighborhood may be developed in its place. The HOA facility featured in the active adult community would be developed with conventional residential housing under this alternative. An additional elementary school site would also be provided to accommodate the additional students generated by non-age restricted housing units.

The central location of the elementary schools within the Specific Plan area reflects the importance of placing youth education in the center of community life. Their location paired with a park also promotes youth recreation and fosters a traditional and healthy community by encouraging children to walk or ride bicycles to school.

The commercial area of the Plan provides such uses as a service station and convenience store for Plan area residents and the adjacent community. The commercial/multi-family mixed use area provides conveniently located shopping, services, entertainment, and dining within the community, as well as opportunities for horizontal and vertical mixed use development. Pedestrian links further encourage residents to walk or bike, rather than drive, to the commercial and mixed use area.

The parcel east of the railroad tracks provides land for employment uses and potential public facilities. Options such as a fire station, cultural uses such as religious and community facilities, and convenience stores can be located strategically at various places in the Plan area (**Figure 5-1**, Public Facilities Location Plan, depicts the areas where public facilities and religious sites could be located). Other land uses throughout the community include detention basins and open space buffers that foster the high quality of life in the community by ensuring adequate stormwater collection and buffering of residential areas from potential environmental impacts such as traffic and railroad noise.

The variety of housing types and associated community amenities provided within Rancho Los Lagos encourages households of all types to live, play, and shop within their own walkable community.

2.2 Residential Neighborhoods

2.2.1 Mixed Density Residential Neighborhood Plans

The Rancho Los Lagos Specific Plan provides a variety of single- and multi-family housing types, sizes, and densities targeted to meet the housing needs of the region's diverse socioeconomic groups. The various housing types are mixed throughout the residential neighborhoods to promote social diversity and strong community bonds.

The multi-family units in the Plan area are " Dwelling (Multiple Family)" defined by the County of Imperial Land Use Ordinance as "a building, or portion thereof, designed for or occupied by three or more families living independently of each other." A multiple family dwelling unit can be an attached product similar to a townhome and/or typical of a vertically stacked building of up to three stories. Examples of multi-family or multiple family dwellings include such products as townhomes, for-sale condominiums and rental apartments. The Plan area includes the following residential types:

Low Density Residential: Detached single-family dwelling units on lots 5,000 square feet and larger.

Medium Density Residential:

- A) Detached single-family dwelling units on lots ranging in size from 3,500 to 4,999 square feet;
- B) Cluster detached single-family dwelling units (four to six single-family detached dwelling units sharing a common private driveway) on individual lots ranging in size from 2,900 to 4,999 square feet; and
- C) Duplex dwelling units (two attached single-family dwelling units sharing a common wall) on lots ranging in size from 3,200 to 4,999 square feet.

High Density Residential: Attached and Multi-family (multiple units stacked vertically) dwelling units in the range of 12-24 dwelling units per acre.

Figures 2-2 through **2-5** show the typical lot layout of low density residential units in the Plan area. **Figures 2-6** through **2-8** illustrate medium density residential units. **Figures 2-9** and **2-10** depict high density residential units in the Plan area. These figures illustrate lot setbacks, building placement and utilization, front porch placement, and appropriate driveway and garage configurations. These figures also illustrate on-street and off-street parking configurations, pedestrian access, and entry visibility.

Residential units with front-entry, rear-entry, or swing-in garages all have narrow front yard setbacks that create a comfortable spatial scale on residential streets, front porches that encourage social interaction, and building orientation and design that foster a sense of safety and community by providing "eyes on the street".

Limited Curb Cuts Area

Where residential units are located across the street from the community park, (see **Figure 2-1** Specific Plan Map), the number of curb cuts for driveways is required to be limited. This is to ensure that the enhanced streetscape of the Community Park Street (see Section 3.2), which extends around the community park, will not be interrupted by individual driveway curb cuts and highly visible garage doors along its length. Furthermore, by limiting curb cuts here, additional on-street parking is available. This is appropriate for such a high use area that is envisioned to have occasional large events and festivals. This central area is the heart of the community where the enhanced aesthetic quality of the built environment is essential.

This limit on curb cuts can be accomplished in several ways. The use of rear-loaded dwelling units will almost totally eliminate curb cuts since the only cuts will be those necessary for alley entrances. Rear-loaded dwelling units with alleys are permitted in all Plan areas. **Figure 2-6** illustrates the typical lot layout of detached rear-loaded dwelling units. Also, **Figure 2-9** illustrates the typical site layout of attached rear-loaded dwelling units. If the use of rear-loaded dwelling units is not feasible or desirable, other design techniques that eliminate multiple curb cuts may be utilized with the approval of the Planning Director of Imperial County. These techniques may include but are not limited to the use of clusters of four to six dwelling units accessed by a single shared common private driveway. (See **Figure 2-8**)

2.2.2 Proposed Phases

The following describes the proposed development phasing for the Rancho Los Lagos Specific Plan (see also **Figure 7-1**). The Plan is comprised of four main components, the conventional residential area, the active adult residential area, the golf course area, and the business park. Within these major areas are other uses including commercial, mixed use, parks and schools. Each component will be developed independently of one another over several years based upon market conditions.

Additionally, each component may be developed over several phases with associated infrastructure and community facilities provided concurrently, proportionate to the percentage of residential units completed, as discussed in Section 7.3 – Phasing. If market conditions preclude the development of an active adult component in the Plan area, a gated, conventional (non-age restricted) residential neighborhood may be developed in its place. An additional elementary school site would also be provided to accommodate the additional students generated by non-age restricted housing units. The maximum number of dwelling units for that component would remain the same. However, the configuration of streets may change due to the addition of a school and the substantial reduction or elimination of the large HOA facility.

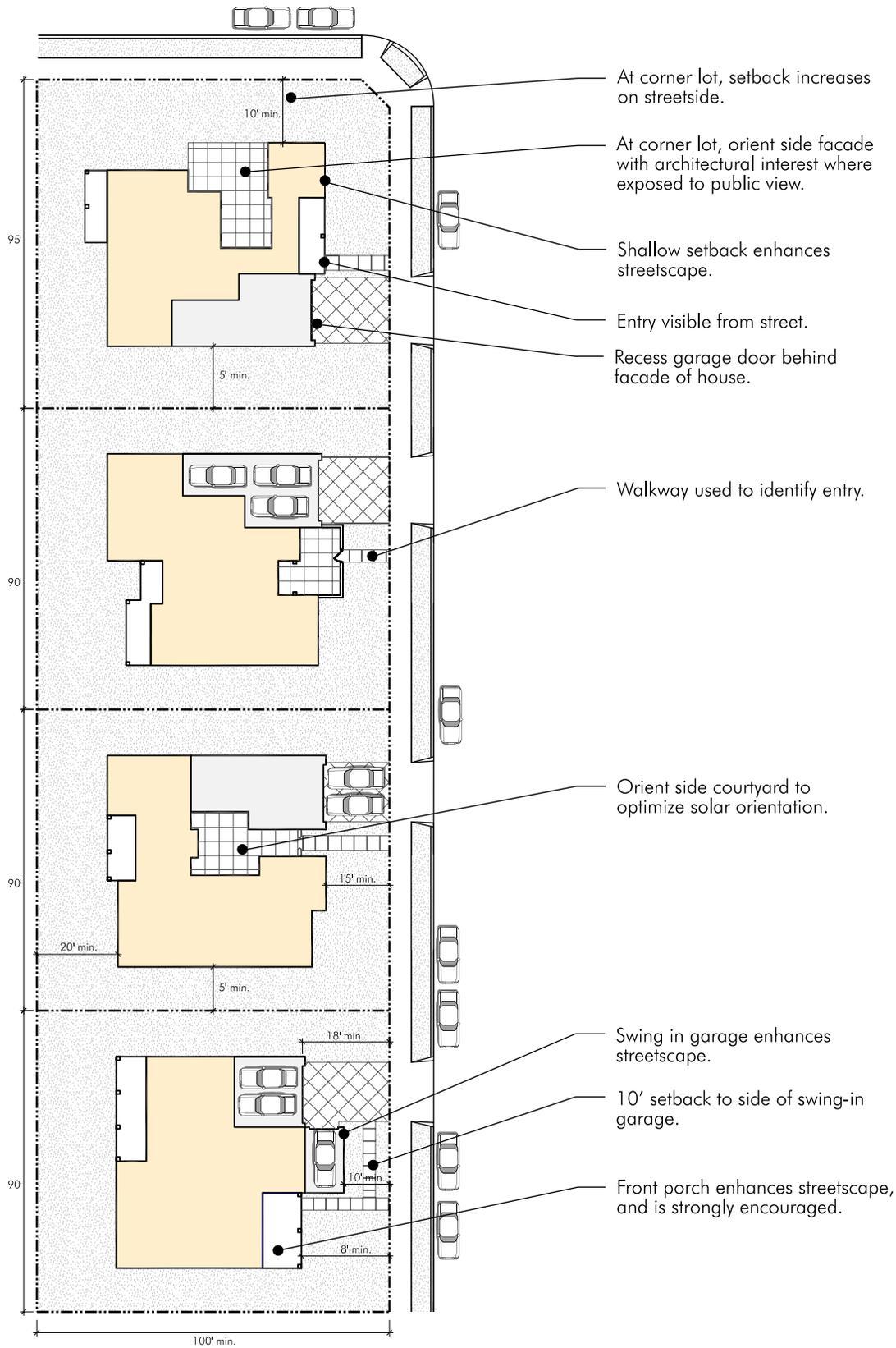


Figure 2-2

Typical 9,000 Square Foot Lot Layout

Not to Scale

P&D Consultants/EDAW

County of Imperial

Rancho Los Lagos

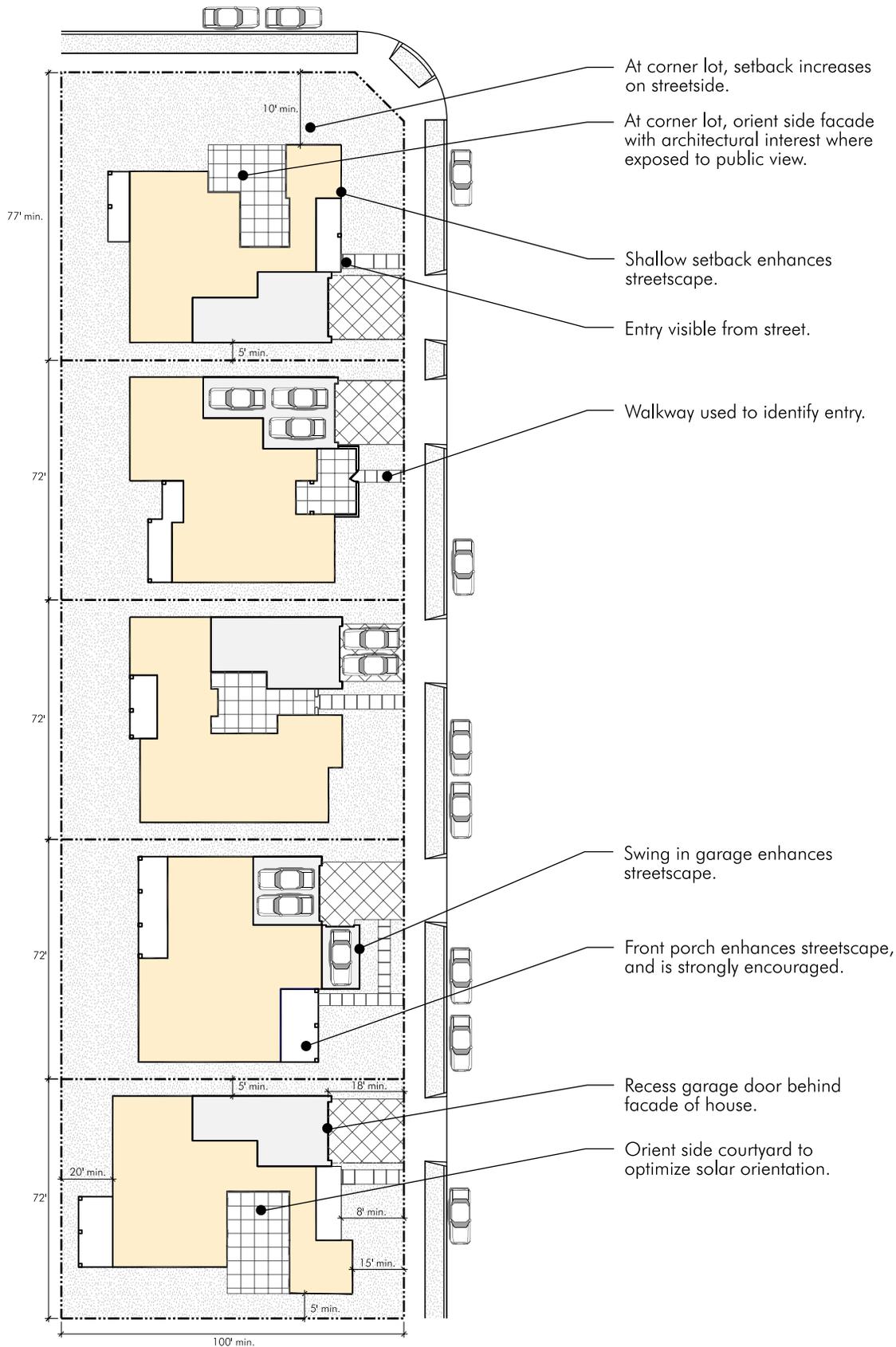


Figure 2-3
 Typical 7,200 Square Foot Lot Layout

Not to Scale

P&D Consultants/EDAW

County of Imperial

Rancho Los Lagos

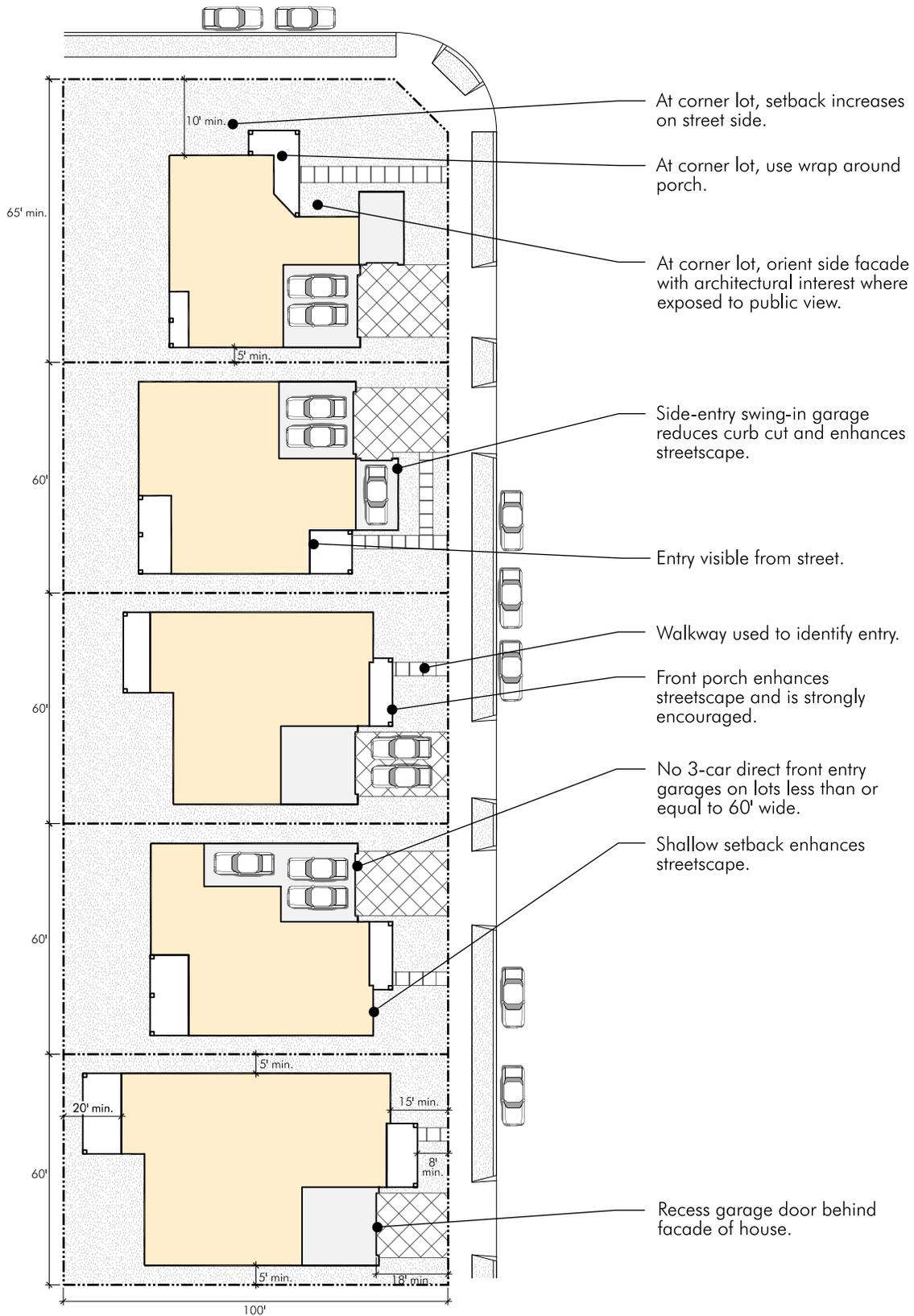


Figure 2-4
 Typical 6,000 Square Foot Lot Layout

Not to Scale

P&D Consultants/EDAW

County of Imperial

Rancho Los Lagos

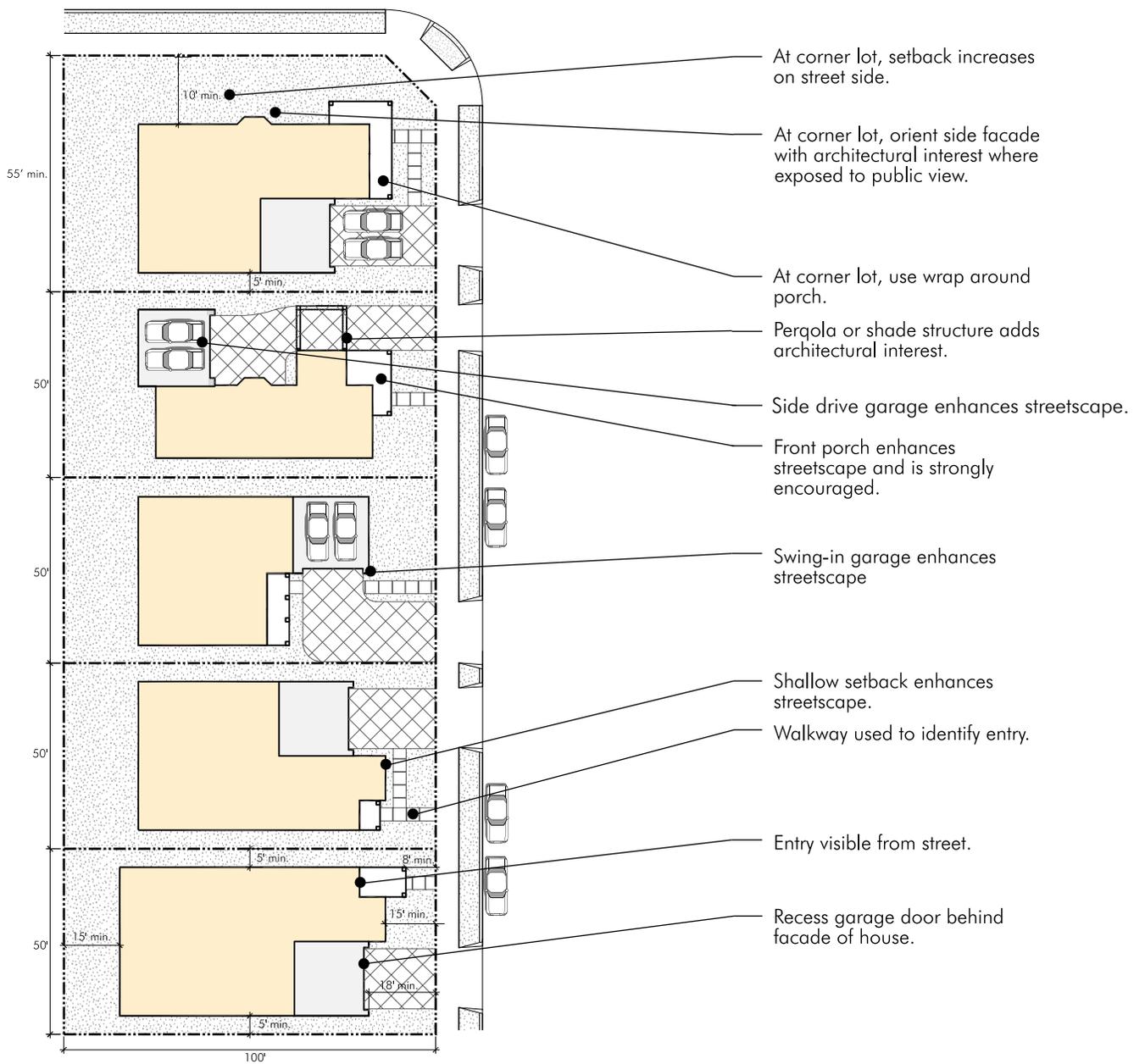


Figure 2-5
 Typical 5,000 Square Foot Lot Layout

Not to Scale

P&D Consultants/EDAW

County of Imperial

Rancho Los Lagos

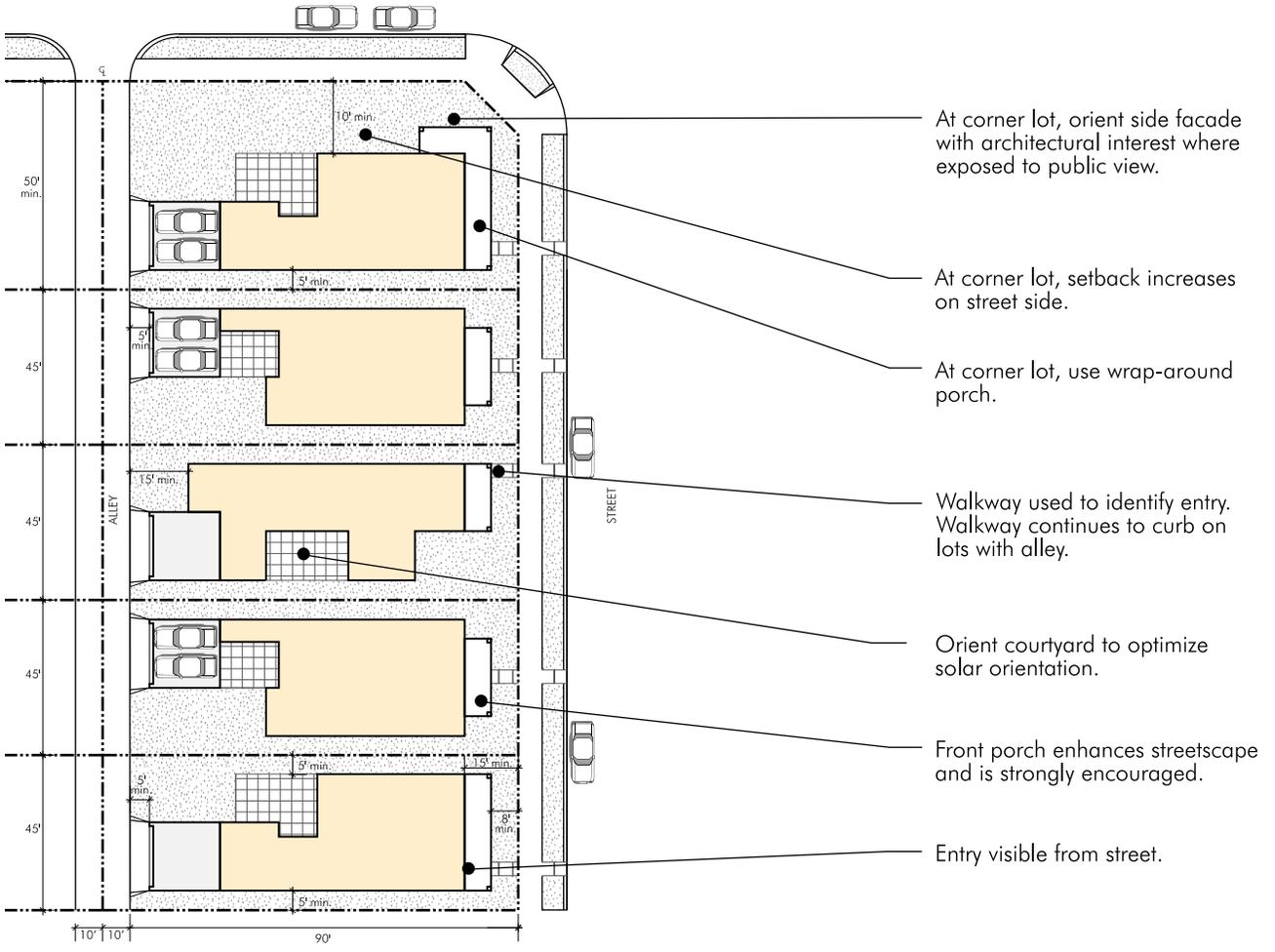


Figure 2-6

Typical 4,000 Square Foot Rear-load Lot Layout

Not to Scale

P&D Consultants/EDAW

County of Imperial

Rancho Los Lagos

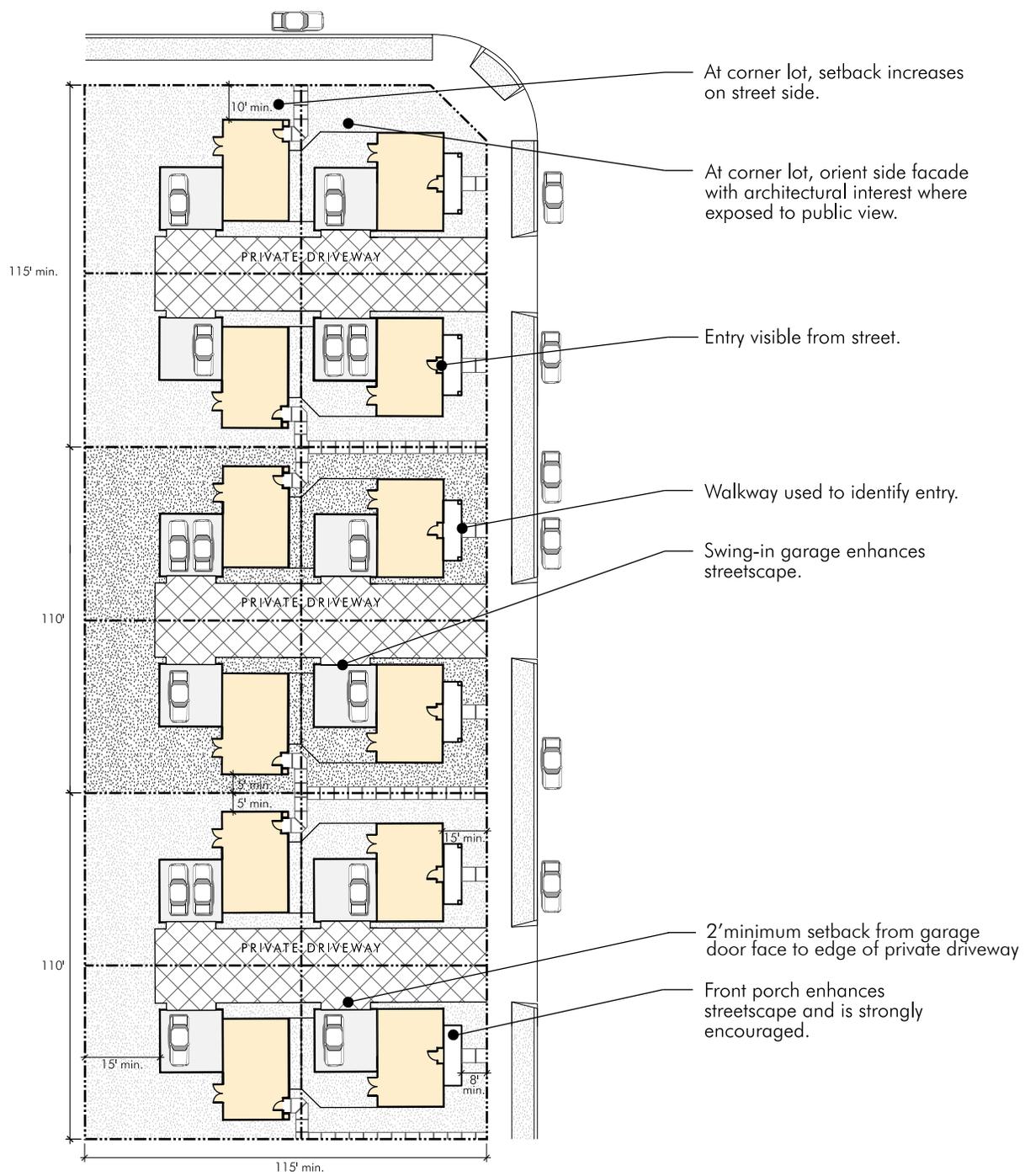


Figure 2-8

Typical 12,650 Square Foot 4-Lot Cluster Layout

Not to Scale

P&D Consultants/EDAW

County of Imperial

Rancho Los Lagos

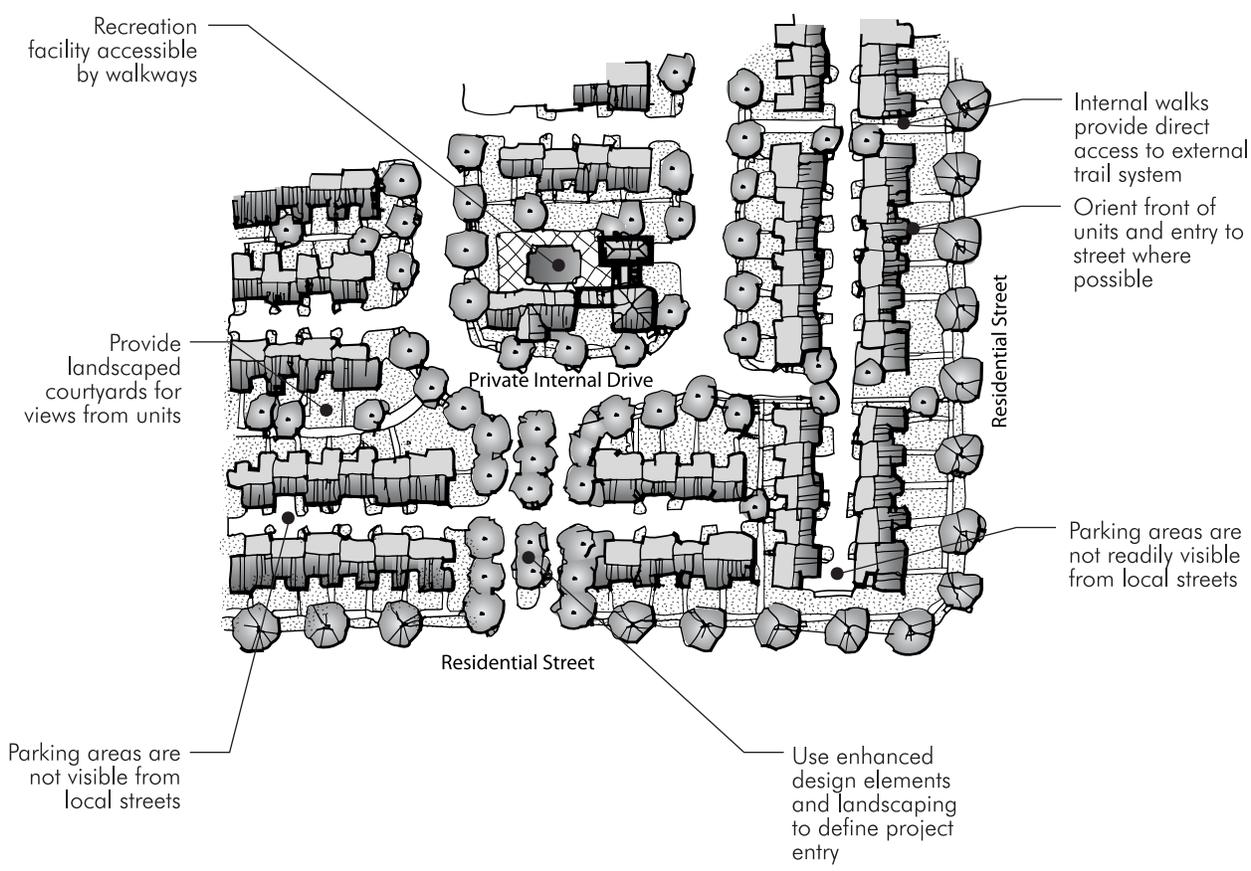


Figure 2-9
 Typical Rear-load Attached Dwelling Site Layout

Not to Scale

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Figure 2-10

Typical Multi-Family Dwelling Site Layout

Not to Scale

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Rancho Los Lagos

The Specific Plan is designed to allow flexibility with respect to the density and unit count in each of the neighborhoods that comprise residential components of the Plan. Each neighborhood contains a permitted density range as well as a minimum and maximum dwelling unit count. Additionally, the transfer of dwelling units to other neighborhoods is permitted as long as established targets and residential unit count minimums and maximums are not exceeded for each respective neighborhood or density category. The Specific Plan contains an overall dwelling unit cap of 3,830 consisting of approximately 2,890 conventional residential units and 940 active adult residential units. A total of 3,830 conventional residential units could be developed if market conditions preclude development of the active adult community. Refer to Section 8.0-, Implementation, for a detailed discussion on residential product flexibility.

Conventional Residential Neighborhood Component

The conventional residential neighborhood component consists of three general phases (see also **Figure 7-1**):

Phase A1 is located in the north central portion of the Plan area on approximately 224 acres adjacent to State Route 86. This phase includes detached single-family homes of various types and sizes and multi-family uses. This phase also contains approximately 17.5 acres of parks, 9 acres of open space buffers/detention basins, and approximately 24 acres of commercial/multi-family mixed use land uses. .

Phase A2 comprises approximately 166 acres immediately east of Phase 1 in the northeastern portion of the Plan area. The phase includes varied, detached single-family homes and multi-family units, one 12-acre elementary school, approximately 18.5 acres of park lands, and approximately 17 acres of open space buffers and detention basins. This phase also contains approximately 3 acres for commercial land uses.

Phase A3 is located south of Phase 2 on approximately 207 acres in the southeastern portion of the Plan area. This phase includes a range of detached single-family dwelling unit types and multi-family units, a 12-acre elementary school, approximately 31 acres of parks, and almost 25 acres of open space buffers and detention basins.

These phases are planned to take into account access, infrastructure, and logical incremental development. Phase A1, first to be developed, has road access to SR-86 via Avenida Del Valle, and is adjacent to developed areas. Infrastructure connections are nearby and available as outlined in the Water and Wastewater Systems Plans (Chapter 6.0). Phase A2 will follow, and will bring in an elementary school as, by that time, development will have attracted enough families with school-age children to warrant a new elementary school. Phase A3 will then complete the conventional residential neighborhood component of the Specific Plan with the addition of a second elementary school. Each of the three conventional development component phases is responsible for improvements to the community park, proportionate to the percentage of residential units completed in each respective phase. The phasing plan also offers the potential for maximizing existing agricultural use of the land over longer periods of time.

Within each of the three conventional residential neighborhood phases, it is anticipated that subdivision maps will be prepared and approved by the County on a unitized basis to allow for sub-phasing of the area and related sub-phasing of required infrastructure facilities.

Active Adult Community Component

The active adult community component consists of four phases:

Phase B1 includes residential units of varying type and lot size on approximately 37 acres as well as the HOA facility on almost 12 acres of land within the central portion of the active adult community.

Phase B2 features residential units of varying type and lot size on approximately 39 acres in the southwestern corner of the active adult community.

Phase B3 consists of residential units varying in type and lot size on approximately 44 acres of land in the northwestern portion of the active adult community.

Phase B4 includes residential units varying in type and lot size on approximately 35 acres of land in the southeastern portion of the active adult community.

Like the conventional residential neighborhood component, the active adult community will be constructed in phases for reasons similar to that mentioned for phases A1 through A3. In Phase B1, convenient access to Avenida Del Valle and to Lavender (Schartz) Road will allow for easy connection to the road infrastructure. Subsequent phases B2 through B4 will rely on the development of prior phases.

Similar to the conventional residential neighborhood phases, within each of the four active adult neighborhood phases, it is anticipated that subdivision maps will be prepared and approved by the County on a unitized basis to allow for sub-phasing of the area and related sub-phasing of required infrastructure facilities.

Gated, Conventional (Non-Age Restricted) Residential Neighborhood

A gated, conventional residential neighborhood may be built in the location of the active adult component of the Plan, if market conditions preclude the development of an active adult community. Phasing and dwelling unit density and design would be similar to that proposed for the active adult community. Under this alternative, the area occupied by the HOA facility in the active adult alternative would be developed with conventional residential units. A third elementary school may then be required, and could be potentially located as shown on **Figure 2-1**.

Golf Course Area Component

The timing of the construction of the 18-hole executive length golf course shall be determined by market conditions, and be built in one phase on about 139 acres.

Business Park Component

The approximately 97 acres of business park land uses are located east of the Southern Pacific Railroad. This area will go through various sub-phases as other growth and market conditions permit. Phasing could therefore conceivably be of staggered development, from any direction or piecemealed together, or the entire component could be developed all at one time.

2.2.3 Residential Use Regulations and Development Standards

Use Regulations

Table 2-2 establishes the use regulations that apply to residential development in the Rancho Los Lagos Specific Plan. These use regulations apply to development within the conventional residential neighborhood and the active adult community, or gated, conventional residential community if market conditions preclude the development of an active adult community. If conflicts between this Plan and County of Imperial Land Use Ordinance regulations exist, the regulations in this Plan shall prevail.

Low density, detached single-family residential development on lots 5,000 square feet and larger shall be subject to the R-1 zone use regulations of the County of Imperial Land Use Ordinance unless otherwise indicated in this Plan.

Development of **medium density**, detached single-family dwelling units on lots ranging in size from 3,500 to 4,999 square feet, cluster dwelling units (see Section 2.1.1) on lots ranging in size from 2,900 to 4,999 square feet, and attached duplex dwelling units on lots ranging in size from 3,200 to 4,999 square feet, shall be subject to the R-2 zone use regulations of the County of Imperial Land Use Ordinance unless otherwise indicated in this plan. The R-2 zone is provided to accommodate single-family residences and duplexes.

High density, attached and multi-family residential refers to development of multi-family units, on various lot sizes in the range of 12 to 24 dwelling units per acre. Multi-family residential development is subject to the R-3 use regulations of the County of Imperial Land Use Ordinance unless otherwise indicated in this Plan. The R-3 zone is intended to provide for the development of apartment buildings, condominiums, and supporting community services.

The commercial/multi-family mixed use area is intended for neighborhood-serving retail uses and apartments. Strong pedestrian connections are intended to link the commercial and residential land uses within this mixed use area. Opportunities for vertical mixed use development such as offices or residential apartments above ground floor retail uses are also allowed. **Table 2-2** identifies the use regulations for this area. Stand alone residential units shall also be permitted as identified in **Table 2-2**.

Table 2-2
Residential Use Regulations

Land Use	Residential Density			Commercial / Multi-Family Mixed Use ¹
	Low	Medium	High	
Single-Family Residential Dwellings				
Detached Dwelling units (DU) on lots 5,000 square feet (SF) or larger in size	P	P	X	X
Detached DU on lots from 3,500 SF to 4,999 SF	X	P	P	X
Cluster DU on lots from 2,900 SF to 4,999 SF	X	P	P	X
Duplex DU on lots from 3,200 SF to 4,999 SF	X	P	P	X
Multi-Family Dwellings¹				
Apartments (24 dwelling units per acre)	X	X	P	P
Townhomes (12 dwelling units per acre)	X	P	P	P
Condominiums (18 dwelling units per acre)	X	X	C	C
Other Dwellings				
Mobile home and recreational vehicle parks	X	X	X	X
Senior citizen-designated multifamily units	X	X	P	P
Rest-, convalescent-, and nursing-homes	X	X	C	C
Other Uses				
Day care centers, nursery schools	C	C	C	C
Religious Facilities	C	C	C	C
Public schools	P	P	P	X
Private and parochial schools	C	C	C	X
Museums and cultural centers	X	X	X	C
Country clubs	X	X	X	X
Commercial-operated public or private parking lots	X	X	X	X
Accessory Structures and Uses				
Secondary Residential Units ²	P	X	X	X
Small family day care home (6 or fewer children)	P	P	P	P
Large family day care home (7-14 children)	C*	C*	C*	C
Small family care home (state-licensed 24 hour non-medical care for 6 or fewer persons)	P	P	P	X
Large family care home (state licensed 24 hour non-medical care for 7-14 persons)	C	C	C	C
Room and board for a maximum of two (2) persons within a single-family dwelling unit only	P	P	X	X
Home occupation	P	P	P	P
Private garages and carports	P	P	P	P
Private rooms and shelters, gazebos, laundry rooms, small buildings for personal storage, hobby rooms (non-business purposes)	P	P	P	P
Private greenhouses and gardens	P	P	P	P

"P" indicates that the use shall be permitted, "X" indicates that the use is prohibited,

"C" indicates that the use may be acceptable with a conditional use permit,

"C*" indicates that the use requires a conditional use permit approved by the Planning Director.

¹ The commercial/multi-family mixed use area is intended for neighborhood-serving retail uses and apartments. Opportunities for vertical mixed use development such as offices or residential apartments above ground floor retail uses are also allowed.

² Secondary residential units or second units are permitted on low-density lots but not on other lot types. Any secondary residential units developed in the Plan area are also subject to the regulations of Title 9, Division 4, Chapter 5 of the County of Imperial Land Use Ordinance.

Development Standards

Table 2-3 shows the development standards for low and medium density residential dwelling units, while **Table 2-4** shows the development standards for high density residential dwelling units, including attached and multi-family units. These development standards also apply to stand alone residential structures permitted in the mixed use commercial/high density residential portion of the Plan area. **Table 2-5** illustrates the development standards for residential uses in vertical mixed use development in the mixed use commercial/high density residential portion of the Plan area.

2.2.4 Residential Design Standards

The following design standards are intended to assist the designer in understanding the requirements pertaining to the proposed residential development within the Rancho Los Lagos Specific Plan. These standards provide good examples of potential design solutions and interpretations of the various mandatory development standards. They are intended to ensure a high level of design quality while at the same time providing the flexibility necessary to encourage creativity on the part of project designers. These standards are also intended to promote development that is walkable, safe, and representative of traditional neighborhood design principles.

Single-Family Residential Design Standards

Site Planning and Orientation. Single family residential development is subject to the following site planning and orientation standards:

- ❖ **Lot Orientation** – Lots located on curves or at corners can often be oriented in a different direction than lots at mid-block. Such lots, therefore, can be non-rectangular and angled on the street.



Corner lot – typical wrap-around porch

**Table 2-3
Low and Medium Density, Single-Family Residential Development Standards**

Development Standards	Minimum Residential Lot Size (square feet)						
	7,200	6,000	5,000	4,000	3,500	3,200 (Duplex)	2,900 ¹ (Cluster)
General Requirements for Dwelling Units (DU)							
Maximum permitted DU per lot	1*	1*	1	1	1	1	1
Minimum covered off-street parking spaces required per DU	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Maximum building height	35' / 2 stories**						
Minimum Lot Dimensions							
Minimum lot width ²	67'	55'	45'	40'	32'	32'	50'
Minimum street frontage ³	67'	55'	45'	40'	32'	32'	n/a
Minimum corner lot width ²	72'	60'	50'	45'	37'	37'	55'
Minimum lot depth ⁴	100'	100'	90'	85'	85'	75'	55'
Minimum Setback Requirements							
Minimum front setback to habitable space	15'	15'	15'	15'	15'	15'	15'
Minimum front setback to garage door facing street ⁵	20'	20'	20'	20'	20'	20'	20'
Minimum front setback to porch ⁶	8'	8'	8'	8'	8'	8'	8'
Minimum interior side setback	5' / 7' ⁷	5' / 7' ⁷	5' / 7' ⁷	5'	5'	5' ⁷	Minimum per Fire Code
Minimum street side setback ^{8, 9, 10}	10'	10'	10'	10'	10'	10'	10'
Minimum rear setback ^{5, 9, 10}	20'	20'	15'	15'	15'	15'	15'
Minimum pool, spa, or pool/spa equipment setback ¹¹	5'	5'	5'	5'	5'	5'	1'
Additional Regulations	Any standard not specifically addressed by this Plan but regulated by the County Land Use Ordinance shall also apply.						

Notes:

- Includes shared private driveway serving four to six cluster lots with private access easements for common use by all lots.
- Lot minimum widths shall be measured at the midpoint between the front and rear lot lines.
- The minimum street frontage for any lot that fronts principally on a turnaround or curving street with a centerline radius of less than 100 feet is 60 percent of the length specified for that dwelling unit type.
- Lot depths shall be measured along the midpoint of the lot widths extended to the front and rear yard lot lines.
- The minimum front setback of 18 feet shall apply to roll-up garage doors that do not encroach into the front setback area while opening. For standard garage doors that encroach into the front setback area while opening, the minimum front setback shall be 20 feet. Minimum setback from the alley to garage door face for rear load units is 5 feet.
- Minimum porch dimensions are as follows: depth of 5 feet; width of 6 feet. Habitable space above or below porch must not encroach into the front setback to habitable space. A wrap-around porch on a corner lot may encroach a maximum of 3 feet into the required side yard setback.
- Minimum interior setback shall be 5 feet on one side of lot line (with seven feet on the other) to maintain twelve feet of building separation. In the case of duplex units, setback is zero along the shared common wall.
- Architectural projections (bay windows and other similar enclosed building elements) may be no wider than six feet (with a maximum combined total length of 10 feet for all projections on one side of a structure) and may encroach one foot into all setbacks but not within four feet of a building corner, provided fire code building separation is respected. Uncovered decks, balconies and trellises may encroach into setbacks, no more than seven feet and no closer than 18 inches to a property line.
- Rear yard encroachment permitted to within five feet of lot line by non-habitable accessory structure (such as greenhouse, pool accessories, shade structure, shed) of one story in height or less.
- Rear yard encroachment permitted to lot line by non-habitable accessory structure (such as greenhouse, pool accessories, shade structure, shed) of five feet in height or less. In alley condition garage may
- Pool or spa setbacks from the property line are necessary to lessen noise impact on neighboring lots.

* Plus no more than 1 accessory dwelling unit.

**Building height means the vertical distance from the finished grade to the highest point of the coping of a flat roof, or to the deck line of a mansard roof, or to the average height of the highest gable of a pitch or hip roof.

Table 2-4
High Density Residential Development Standards*

Development Standards	High Density Residential		
	Attached	Multi-family	
General Requirements			
Maximum permitted dwelling units (DU) per gross acre	12-16	18-24	
Maximum structure height (ft/stories)	42' / 3 stories	45' / 3 stories	
Minimum private open space (per unit) ¹	160 SF	100 SF	
Off street parking spaces required per DU	See note: varies by quantity and type of units ²		
Minimum Lot Dimensions	n/a		
Minimum Setback Requirements			
Minimum front setback to habitable space	15'	15'	
Minimum front setback to garage door face ^{3,4}	20'	20'	
Minimum front setback to porch ⁵	12'	12'	
Minimum side setback (attached units) ⁶	0'	0'	
Minimum side setback to adjacent lot ⁶	5'	15'	
Minimum distance from building to building on same lot ⁶	n/a	Minimum allowed by fire code	Minimum allowed by fire code
Minimum street side setback	10'	15'	15'
Minimum rear setback ⁴	15'	15'	15'
Additional regulations	Any standard not specifically addressed by this Plan but regulated by the County Land Use Ordinance shall also apply.		

Notes:

1. Minimum depth of eight feet required for private open space except for porches, balconies or decks (See note 5 below).
 2. One Bedroom or Studio unit: 1 covered space + 0.5 uncovered space; Two Bedroom unit: 2 covered spaces; Three or more Bedroom unit: 2 covered spaces + 0.25 uncovered spaces; Age restricted unit: 1 covered space. One additional space per every five units shall be provided as guest parking regardless of unit size or household type. Parking areas for residents shall be located within 150' of the dwelling unit they serve.
 3. The minimum front setback of 18 feet shall apply to roll-up garage doors that do not encroach into the front setback area while opening. For garage doors that encroach into the front setback area while opening, the minimum front setback shall be 20 feet.
 4. Minimum setback from the alley to garage door face for rear load units is 5 feet.
 5. Private open space may include porches, balconies or decks attached to separate units. In order to qualify as private open space, the minimum depth of a porch, deck or balcony is five feet. Habitable space above or below porch must not encroach into the front setback to habitable space.
 6. Architectural projections (bay windows and other similar enclosed building elements) may be no wider than six feet (with a maximum combined total length of 10 feet for all projections on one side of a structure) and may encroach one foot into all setbacks but not within four feet of a building corner. Uncovered decks, balconies and trellises may encroach into setbacks, no deeper than seven feet and no closer than 18 inches to a property line.
- * These development standards also apply to stand alone residential structures permitted in the commercial/multi-family mixed use area of the Plan.

Table 2-5
Commercial/Multi-Family Mixed Use Area Development Standards*

Development Standards	High Density Residential	
	Attached	Multi-family
Residential Requirements		
Maximum permitted dwelling units (DU) per gross acre	12-16	18-24
Maximum structure height (ft/stories)	42' / 3 stories	45' / 3 stories or 2 stories over commercial
Minimum private open space (per unit) ¹	160 SF	100 SF
Off street parking spaces required per DU	See note: varies by quantity and type of units ²	
Minimum Lot Dimensions	n/a	
Maximum Commercial Floor Area Ratio	0.35	
Minimum Setback Requirements		
Minimum building/structure setback from roadway	20'	20'
Minimum building/structure setback from lot line	15'	15'
Minimum building/structure setback from adjacent building/structure	15'	15'
Additional regulations	Any standard not specifically addressed by this Plan but regulated by the County Land Use Ordinance shall also apply.	

Notes:

1. Minimum depth of eight feet required for private open space except for porches, balconies or decks (See note 5 below).
 2. One Bedroom or Studio unit: 1 covered space + 0.5 uncovered space; Two Bedroom unit: 2 covered spaces; Three or more Bedroom unit: 2 covered spaces + 0.25 uncovered spaces; Age restricted unit: 1 covered space. One additional space per every five units shall be provided as guest parking regardless of unit size or household type. Parking areas for residents shall be located within 150' of the dwelling unit they serve. Furthermore, residential parking shall be reserved and segregated from commercial parking in vertical mixed use structures which include combinations of dwelling units, business and professional office uses and commercial uses within two or three-story vertical mixed use structures.
 3. The minimum front setback of 18 feet shall apply to roll-up garage doors that do not encroach into the front setback area while opening. For garage doors that encroach into the front setback area while opening, the minimum front setback shall be 20 feet.
 4. Minimum setback from the alley to garage door face for rear load units is 5 feet.
 5. Private open space may include porches, balconies or decks attached to separate units. In order to qualify as private open space, the minimum depth of a porch, deck or balcony is five feet. Habitable space above or below porch must not encroach into the front setback to habitable space.
 6. Architectural projections (bay windows and other similar enclosed building elements) may be no wider than six feet (with a maximum combined total length of 10 feet for all projections on one side of a structure) and may encroach one foot into all setbacks but not within four feet of a building corner. Uncovered decks, balconies and trellises may encroach into setbacks, no deeper than seven feet and no closer than 18 inches to a property line.
- * Refer to Table 2-6 for commercial uses in the commercial/multi-family mixed use area.

- ❖ **Housing Diversity** – The Rancho Los Lagos Specific Plan shall include a variety of compatible housing types and styles.
- ❖ **Housing Design and Orientation** – Houses will be oriented to the public right-of-way and public parks with entries, balconies, porches and other architectural features to enliven the public realm and provide “eyes on the street.” Buildings shall be sited in such a way that the building promotes a sense of community and does not appear isolated from the street and surrounding buildings.
- ❖ **Garages** – With the exception of duplex lots, garages must be located and designed so that garage doors are not the visually dominant features of the street façade. Side-drive garages located behind the principal residential façade are preferred over other garage types to reduce the visual prominence of the garage on the streetscape. Side-drive garages have longer driveways, which allow the garage to be placed farther back from the street. They can be attached or detached from the residence. (See Figure 2-5 for example).

Garage location, configuration and access shall be dictated by the type of garage and the building type/lot size to which it is associated. Where building type or lot size makes the provision of a side-drive garage infeasible, a recessed and swing-in garage may be provided. These garage types and three-car garages include:

Three-car garages – Three-car garages must be split into regular plus swing-in garage or tandem arrangement.

Swing-in Garages – Swing-in Garages are oriented such that the door is perpendicular to the public street. These structures may be attached to the principal residential structure and the garage door is perpendicular to the street. Swing-in garages have a front setback of a minimum 10 feet (10’) from the public right-of-way to the street side of the garage. In order to maintain lively and walkable neighborhoods, the street façade of the garage shall have the same architectural detail as the street façade of the principal residential structure. In addition, swing-in garages shall not exceed 2 cars in width.

Recessed Garages – Recessed Garages are front entry garages accessed from a public street. They have a larger front setback than the main residence and are usually attached to the main residence. All recessed garages shall be set back from the front lot line at least eighteen feet (18’) with roll-up door, or twenty feet (20’) with a swing-up type door to provide adequate parking area on the driveway. All garages shall be recessed a minimum of five feet (5’) behind the street façade of the principal residential structure. Residence façades in the same plane as a recessed garage should be enhanced with a front porch or other design elements. Front entry garages that are on the same building plane as the front door are prohibited. An example recessed garage is depicted on the next page.



Recessed garages enhance streetscape

- ◆ All garage doors shall be architecturally compatible with the principal residential structure; all garage doors shall incorporate one or more of the following: windows, raised or recessed panels, and/or another architectural feature. Solid, blank garage doors shall be prohibited.
- ◆ Varied garage placements are encouraged to break up the monotony of all garage doors being parallel to the street.
- ◆ A variety of different yet compatible garage door designs shall be used throughout each residential neighborhood to ensure variety. The design of the garage door shall relate to the particular architectural style selected for the structure.

Lighting. Dark night skies are a unique resource in rural communities and shall be preserved for future generations to enjoy through the following measures:

- ❖ Streetlights should be provided as necessary for safety as determined by the County Engineer.
- ❖ Spillover lighting shall be minimized through careful selection of the appropriate light standard and light source.

- ❖ Light shields shall be utilized on all outdoor lighting standards to prevent light from being directed above the horizontal plane.
- ❖ Standard lighting shall be high-pressure sodium (HPS) lights. Public parks and paseos shall be illuminated with low source lighting elevated not more than 16 feet including bollard lighting and pole lighting.
- ❖ Single-family residences may have outdoor lighting for safety and security. Light shields shall be required to prevent excessive light spill over. Walkways, stairs, and drives may be illuminated with down-lighting, low voltage lighting or light sources with directional shields.
- ❖ Gentle up-lighting may be used to highlight significant architectural features and landscape elements as long as light is not obtrusive to adjacent homes.
- ❖ Lighting plans including location, type, materials, details and photometrics of all project lighting shall be submitted concurrent with building permits.

Mass and Scale. Scale and mass are important characteristics of buildings within single-family neighborhoods. Mass and scale should be similar within neighborhoods to create visual consistency. Residential development is subject to the following standards addressing mass and scale:

- ❖ The mass and scale of each structure shall relate to the use of the structure as a single-family residence and shall not overwhelm or dominate its surroundings.
- ❖ Combinations of one and two-story elements on the same building are encouraged to create visual diversity. Building mass should be articulated to the extent practical to reflect the architectural style.
- ❖ Building mass should reflect a reasonable relation to the size of the lot.
- ❖ Architectural elements such as chimneys, balconies, porches, and pot shelves are encouraged to be provided for visual diversity.
- ❖ Balconies, gables, eaves and other projections may be used to break up simple architectural forms.
- ❖ Architectural elements of buildings shall be designed to avoid box-like structures.
- ❖ Courtyards, if appropriate to the style, may be used to break up the building mass.

Architecture. Single-family residential development in the Plan area is subject to the following architectural standards:

❖ **Architectural Style**

- ◆ All residential structures shall be of high quality architectural styles that complement the community and each other.
- ◆ Individual dwelling units shall be distinguishable from one another to reduce monotony and provide an interesting streetscape.
- ◆ Structures shall be made visually and architecturally pleasing by varying the height, color, setback, materials, texture, landscaping, trim, and roof shape.
- ◆ Architectural details and exterior colors shall reinforce and enhance the architectural form and style of the structure.

- ❖ **Porches, Windows, and Entry Features.** Attractive front doors, windows, and front porches are strongly encouraged to promote neighborhood interaction and walkable residential streets. All front entrance areas, windows, and porches shall be oriented toward, and easily recognizable from, the public right-of-way and public streets. An example of a home with an emphasized front entry and a unit with a covered entry projected forward are depicted below.



Architecture emphasizes front entries

- ◆ Porches are encouraged to be covered and extend at least six feet in width along the front wall of the house, not including the garage face. Porches must also be compatible with, and complementary to, the architectural style of the residential structure. Porches may be raised or at ground level

and porch floors shall be constructed of hard surface materials such as concrete, wood, tile, brick, or cut or flat stone.

- ◆ Windows and entry features shall be emphasized instead of garage doors on street facades of all principal residential structures. Window and front entry door design shall also be compatible and complementary to the building design of the principal residential structure. The rhythm, size, and proportions of windows and entry features should be consistent for all buildings in a neighborhood. Entryways and windows shall be oriented toward and easily recognizable from the street. In addition, window and front entry door placement shall maximize visibility to the street.
- ◆ Entry features may be accompanied by a projecting overhead element such as a shed, arch, or gable roof providing coverage and weather protection. Entry features shall be an integral architectural feature compatible with the main structure.
- ◆ Window placement should provide for natural light and effective cross ventilation. The design of each dwelling unit shall consider the home's solar orientation for window placement. South- and west-facing windows not shaded by roof overhangs could be shaded with bracketed trellises or awnings. Tailoring window placement to the home's location creates an enhanced streetscape composed of alternating elevations that vary for practical energy efficiency reasons.
- ◆ Simple, unadorned aluminum or similar windows shall be prohibited on any wall visible from a public right-of-way, including building rear elevations facing public right-of-ways. Accent features such as sills, shutters, false canopies, and multi-paned windows shall be used.



Varied forms and textures add architectural interest

❖ **Building Elevations**

- ◆ Building elevations should be harmonious and compatible with the design elements of the architectural style of the building.
- ◆ Building elevations should be varied and articulated to provide visual interest to the street and pedestrians.
- ◆ Building elevations visible from the public right-of-way and public spaces shall have the same level of architectural detail as the front elevation.

❖ **Facade and Roof Articulation**

- ◆ Long, uninterrupted exterior walls in excess of thirty feet shall be avoided on all structures visible from public streets and parks. Larger wall and roof planes are encouraged to include three dimensional features such as porches, balconies, bay window, dormers and similar features.
- ◆ The integration of varied texture, relief, color and design accents on building walls can soften the architecture and is encouraged.
- ◆ For sloped roofs, both vertical and horizontal articulation is encouraged. Rooflines shall be compatible with the design and scale of surrounding dwellings. Roof articulation may be achieved by changes in plane of no less than two and one-half feet and/or the use of traditional roof forms such as gables, hips and dormers. Flat roofs and A-frame type roofs are discouraged unless appropriate to the architectural style of the dwelling.
- ◆ Gable, hip or shed roof forms should be utilized, consistent with the architectural style of the building.
- ◆ Roof pitch may vary from flat to 6:12 according to the style. Varied plate heights and ridge heights may be used to create offsets in the ridgeline to better articulate roof forms and building massing.
- ◆ Roof forms, materials and colors of garages or other detached structures shall be designed to reflect the character and materials of the principal residential structure. While they may vary in color, roof form or materials they must complement the general architecture of the main structure.
- ◆ Roof materials should be appropriate to the style of the house, roof form, and slope. Heavier or more complex roofing materials (tile, concrete tiles) should be placed on simpler roofs - if they are used on complex roofs, they can cause leakage or unnecessary problems. Conversely, more complex roofs require monolithic, simpler materials (shingles). The allowable materials for roofs include tile, slate, concrete tiles, and thicker architectural grade shingles. Built-up asphalt on flat roofs is permitted, while metal is not.

- ❖ **Varied Structure Design** – The design of structures within the development shall be varied. A reasonable difference in the massing and composition and finish materials of each adjacent house shall be accomplished in order to reduce monotony and create variety and interest. Each street block shall include a variety of models and building elevations.

- ❖ **Materials and Colors**
 - ◆ Materials and colors shall be consistently applied on all street facades and be chosen to work harmoniously with adjacent materials and architectural style.
 - ◆ Varying the roof and building colors from dwelling to dwelling is encouraged.
 - ◆ All structures on a site shall have a consistent and complementary color scheme (including the roof color).
 - ◆ Building materials and colors should compliment the corresponding architectural style and natural environment surrounding the project. In general, subdued colors are more appropriate on the body of a structure with brighter or bold colors generally limited to architectural details and window and door trim. Garish or overly bold colors shall be avoided.
 - ◆ Stucco, natural or artificial stone having the necessary fire retardant characteristics, is encouraged for exterior surfaces.
 - ◆ Color is intended as a primary theme element, and color values should be selected according to the design theme of the home.
 - ◆ Accent color should be used for shutters, awnings, trim, fascia, balcony rails, inlaid tile bands or cornice bands, and should relate to the architectural form and character of the building.
 - ◆ Asphalt paving is prohibited for driveways.

- ❖ **Accessory Structures** - The design of accessory structures shall be architecturally compatible with the principal residential structure through the use of consistent architectural style, exterior building and roofing colors and materials, and landscaping.

- ❖ **Additional Building Components**
 - ◆ Gutters and downspouts should be placed so as not to detract from or compete with the architectural design of the building.
 - ◆ Exposed gutters and downspouts should be painted to match adjacent roof, fascia, trim or wall colors.
 - ◆ All flashing, sheet metal, vents and pipes should be painted to match the adjacent surface.

- ◆ If provided, skylights should be incorporated into the roof design to provide natural light and passive solar energy. Frame color should blend with the surrounding roof color, natural aluminum frames are not allowed.
- ◆ Solar panels, if used, should be integrated into the roof design.
- ❖ **Screening** – Any heating or cooling equipment or other mechanical equipment, whether on the roof, side of structure or ground, shall be screened. The method of screening must be architecturally compatible in terms of materials, color, shape and size and shall blend with the building design.

Landscape Architecture. All areas on a residential lot that are not covered by structures, drives, parking or hardscape shall be appropriately landscaped and maintained by the property owner.

- ❖ Trees and plants are encouraged to be used as screening to enhance residential privacy.
- ❖ The landscaping installed shall primarily consist of drought-tolerant species requiring minimal irrigation, fertilization, and maintenance.
- ❖ The use of rocks, boulders, and earthen berms are strongly encouraged to create visual interest.
- ❖ Vegetative ground cover should be maximized to absorb rainwater and reduce runoff. Permeable surfaces should be used whenever possible to reduce runoff from paving.
- ❖ The generous use and thoughtful placement of trees with regard to solar orientation shall be encouraged so as to provide adequate shade for both dwellings and private open space.
- ❖ Entrances to alleys should be landscaped. Walls in alleys abutting residential uses shall be screened with landscaping such as clinging vines, rocks, or other low-maintenance solutions. Landscape areas including trees adjacent and between garages in alley-loaded residential areas are encouraged.

Walls and Fences. The Plan area utilizes a wall and fence hierarchy that is an integral part of the community. This system of walls and fences includes ‘*perimeter*’ walls, ‘*community*’ walls, and ‘*private*’ walls and fences. As described below, some walls are required and some are merely recommended. Refer to **Figure 2-11** Wall Location Plan which illustrates the general location of the required perimeter and community walls. In addition, **Figure 2-12** Typical Recommended Wall Locations illustrates specific conditions relating to residential lot orientation where community walls are recommended.



Source: P&D Consultants in conjunction with EDAW, 2007; 2008; 2009

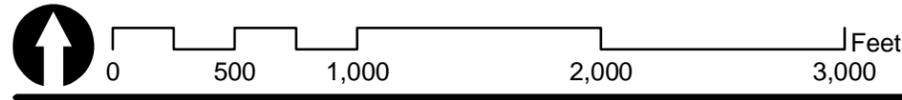
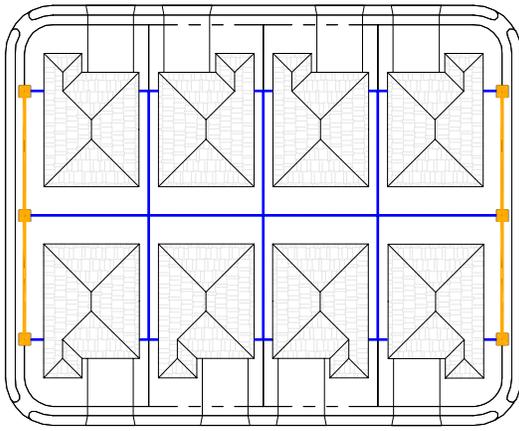
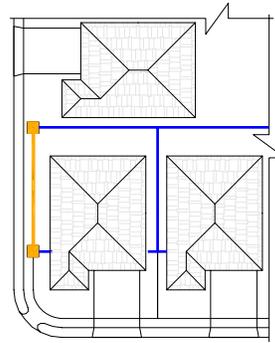


Figure 2-11
Wall Location Plan
Rancho Los Lagos

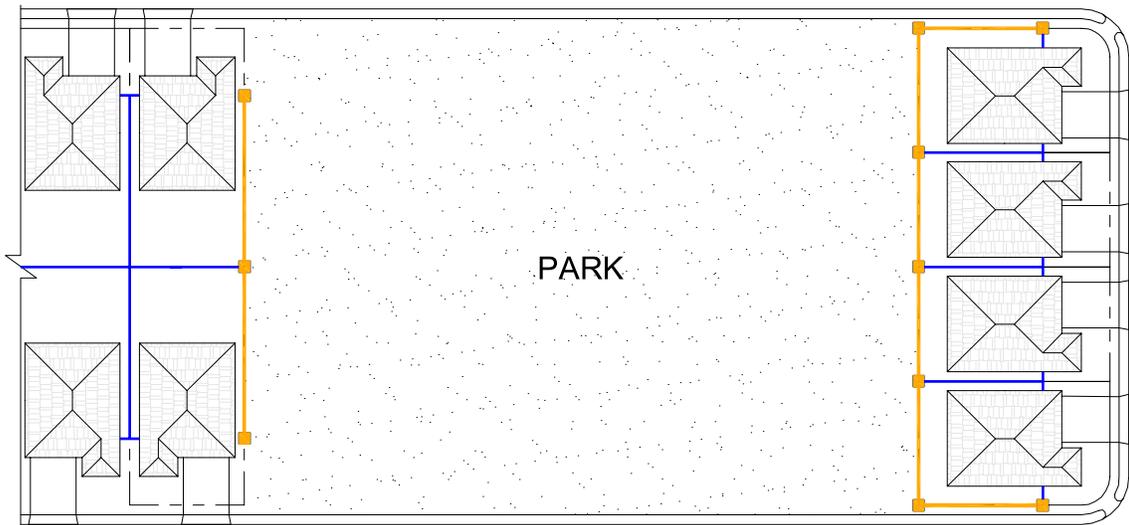
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**PARTIAL LENGTH COMMUNITY WALL
AT SIDE YARD
(RECOMMENDED)**

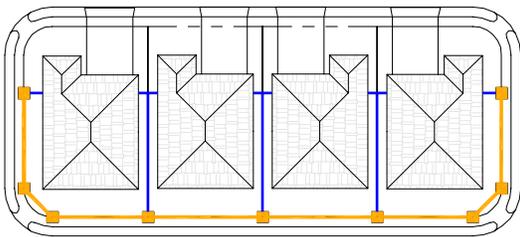


**PARTIAL LENGTH COMMUNITY WALL
AT SIDE YARD
(RECOMMENDED)**

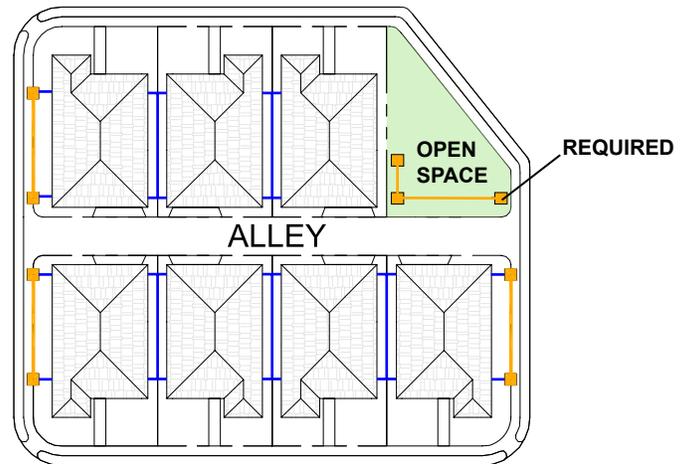


**PARTIAL LENGTH COMMUNITY WALL AT SIDE YARD
ADJACENT TO PARK
(REQUIRED)**

**FULL LENGTH COMMUNITY WALL AT REAR YARD
ADJACENT TO PARK
(REQUIRED)**



**FULL LENGTH COMMUNITY WALL AT REAR YARD (REQUIRED)
WITH PARTIAL COMMUNITY WALL LENGTH AT SIDE YARD**



**PARTIAL COMMUNITY WALL LENGTH AT SIDE YARD -
ALLEY CONDITION (RECOMMENDED - OPTIONAL)
REQUIRED WHERE UNIT ABUTS OPEN SPACE ACROSS ALLEY**

KEY

- PRIVATE WALL / FENCE
OPTIONAL ALL LOCATIONS
- COMMUNITY WALL

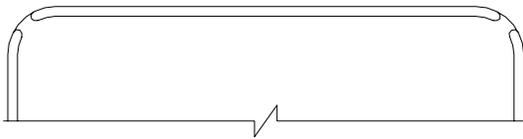


Figure 2-12

Typical Recommended Wall Locations

Not to Scale

P&D Consultants/EDAW

County of Imperial

Rancho Los Lagos

First, *perimeter* walls define the limits of the community and buffer the neighborhoods from undesirable noise and visual impacts of the railroad and surrounding arterial roadways. At entry locations to the Plan area, the perimeter walls shall be physically or visually integrated into entry features that emphasize the design style of the community and function as enhanced focal points. Along Lavender (Schartz) Road, and some portions of Jameson Road, the perimeter wall is atop a landscaped berm (See **Figures 3-4 and 3-5**). Along Route 86, the perimeter wall is also atop a landscaped berm of a similar configuration to the berm along Lavender (Schartz) Road. At the mixed use area, a perimeter wall is required along residential portions if a horizontal mixed use scheme is utilized. The intent is to screen the residential from SR-86 yet allow visibility from SR-86 to areas that are primarily commercial.

Second, *community* walls extend the visual themes established by the perimeter walls into the Plan area. The community walls extend from the entry features along both sides of each entry road to an appropriate end point at an intersecting street. Avenida Del Valle differs from this condition as the edges of the commercial land use area and the golf course are defined by enhanced landscaping rather than a wall along this street. However, community walls continue along the north side of Avenida Del Valle to enhance this special featured main entry to the Plan area. Along the south side of Avenida Del Valle, the golf course is an important visual amenity and is accordingly not screened or walled off. Additional community walls are recommended and may be added at the project developer's discretion to delineate or enhance other public spaces or streetscapes.

Third, *private* walls and fences delineate individual lot lines or are for decorative use within residential blocks. Specific wall and/or fence designs are not required by this Specific Plan. Private walls and fences where desired will be constructed by the individual homebuilders in accordance with the design theme for the specific neighborhood, and will be maintained by the individual homeowner. In some cases, a community wall to delineate the division between individual lots and public spaces is recommended and may be used at the project developer's discretion. Where a lot line is not delineated by a community wall, a private wall or fence may be used.

The following wall and fence mandatory requirements reinforce the consistent identity of the community and help to create a visual continuity that will contribute to the Plan area's overall aesthetic quality:

- ❖ Full community walls are required at rear lot line facing street condition.
- ❖ No walls or fences above 3 feet in height are permitted in front yard setbacks.
- ❖ Partial community walls and fences are permitted at side yard facing street conditions spanning the rear 50% of the side lot line from the rear lot line to an

architecturally suitable end point adjacent to the dwelling. The end point of the wall shall be a minimum of 10 feet from the public right-of-way.

- ❖ Walls and fences shall be set back from the sidewalk by a landscape easement per street sections in Chapter 3.0 - Circulation Plan. This easement softens the appearance of the wall with vegetation to improve the aesthetic quality of the community. All walls, fences and hedges shall be subject to the height and visibility requirements of the Fences section of the Land Use Ordinance.
- ❖ Walls and fences shall not exceed 6 feet in height unless a taller wall is specifically required for sound attenuation purposes at the perimeter Plan area only. The height of a wall shall be measured vertically from the highest point at ground level immediately adjacent to the base of wall to the highest point at the top of the wall.
- ❖ Where possible, walls and fences are to be integrated with adjacent structures and extend into landscaped areas to blend buildings into their surrounding environments.
- ❖ Pilasters or other vertical elements shall be provided at appropriate intervals to break up long horizontal lengths of walls and fences.
- ❖ Perimeter walls may be of simple concrete block construction with wall covering vines to provide interest as well as discourage graffiti.
- ❖ All walls and fences visible from a public right-of-way shall be constructed of materials, colors, and textures that are consistent throughout the development and are in harmony with the overall theme and character of the development.
- ❖ All walls shall be constructed of materials durable in the desert environment. The use of wood is discouraged as it is not durable in these arid conditions.
- ❖ Perimeter walls (and any other wall used for sound attenuation) should consist of either concrete block or stucco with capped pilasters.
- ❖ On all walls and fences, attention should be paid to railing and cap details.
- ❖ The use of a single color and texture of fencing or walls within a builder product area will be encouraged to create a continuity of color, although harmonious diversity and moderate variation are also encouraged when considering the Plan area as a whole.

High Density Multi-Family Design Standards

These standards apply to all high density multi-family residential development land use areas and the residential portion of the commercial/multi-family mixed use area.

Site Planning and Building Orientation. The following site planning and orientation standards apply to high density multi-family residential development land use areas and the residential portion of the mixed use commercial/high density residential land use area

- ❖ Multi-family developments shall be composed of multi-unit buildings with a strong architectural orientation toward the street, entry features such as covered entries that provide direct access to the street, and parking areas that are located to the rear of the units.
- ❖ Designs should emphasize the main entrance, place shared facilities in locations easily accessible to all units, and locate buildings in a manner that respects the street and reinforces the streetscape.
- ❖ Multi-family developments surrounded by high walls, parking lots, and rows of carports are to be avoided.
- ❖ The following specific design standards apply:
 - ◆ The front yard setback of a building should be similar to the average setback lines of the buildings located to either side of the building.
 - ◆ Buildings located adjacent to streets must face onto the street, or may be grouped around a central green in a configuration which as a whole fronts the street.
 - ◆ When buildings front onto a public street, park, or other public area, the street façade(s) and building entries must orient to the street.
 - ◆ Building orientation should relate to adjacent uses.
 - ◆ Functional covered balconies, decks, covered porches, and other architectural detailing that reflect the style of the building are encouraged.
 - ◆ The use of offset window, door, and exterior deck placement to preserve visual privacy for individual units is encouraged.
 - ◆ Site buildings to take advantage of open space views, courtyard open spaces or views to private recreational facilities.
 - ◆ Townhome buildings shall be limited to a range of three to eight units to avoid overly long building elevations.
 - ◆ Pedestrian circulation should be sited with adequate separation from vehicular traffic.
 - ◆ Pedestrian walkways should be provided to link dwelling units with facilities within the multi-family project, such as common open space, plazas and courtyards, parking areas, and public sidewalks and paseos. Pedestrian facilities should also link multi-family project to adjacent uses.
 - ◆ Common facilities shall be located centrally and linked to common outdoor open space.

- ◆ Multi-family units shall be uniformly clustered and evenly dispersed throughout the dedicated multi-family areas in the site plan.
- ❖ **Visibility** – Whenever possible, design and placement of residential dwellings and other features shall maximize visibility of public spaces and encourage social interaction. This includes building orientation, placement of windows, doors and balconies, buildings and site entrances, placement and type of landscape materials, types of walls and fences and other physical obstructions.
- ❖ **Project Entries** – Project entry areas provide the resident and visitor with an enhanced image of the project and create a positive identity for the development. They should be prominent and visible by providing an attractive area with landscaping, open space areas, and project directories. Multi-family projects should provide as many private, ground-level entries to individual units as possible. Special attention should be given to hardscape and landscape treatments to enhance the overall project image.
- ❖ **Entry Drives** – The principal vehicular access into a multi-family housing project shall be through an entry drive rather than a parking drive whenever possible. Colored, textured paving treatment at entry drives is encouraged for a minimum length of ten feet (10') located immediately adjacent to the street right-of-way. Landscaping, use of entry monuments, shade structures and creative site design should frame and distinguish entry drives and complement the theme of the development.
- ❖ **Parking and Drives** – Large, monotonous and undivided parking lots shall not be permitted in multi-family projects. Multiple smaller-scale parking lots shall be provided.
 - ◆ Parking areas shall be located to the rear of residential structures or within the interior of the development to allow residential units to front on the street. Dispersed parking courts located to the side of the units are the preferred alternative when environmental considerations or site constraints preclude such parking locations.
 - ◆ Parking courts shall be screened from view of adjacent streets in such cases and shall not be located closer to the street than the street facade building line of the principal residential structure.
 - ◆ Parking lots should be designed and provided with adequate lighting to ensure pedestrian safety.
 - ◆ Landscape bulb-outs in parking areas shall, wherever possible, align with major building entrances to provide pedestrian access to the building entrance from a parking court or drive. Bulb-outs that align with

entrances should be at least two car spaces wide and should include a pathway as well as a vertical landscape or architectural element such as a trellis or a tree.

- ◆ Perimeter parking driveways are discouraged.
- ◆ Parking areas should allow easy access and surveillance from housing units.
- ◆ Guest parking should be distributed throughout the development and clearly identified.
- ◆ Residential parking areas shall be separate from commercial parking areas.

❖ **Garages**

- ◆ Garages and carports shall be architecturally consistent and integrated with the buildings.
- ◆ Individual garages within residential structures shall be enclosed behind garage doors.
- ◆ Townhouse dwellings that front public streets shall have garages accessible from alleys or internal drives located at the rear of the project.
- ◆ Garages in multi-family developments shall be accessible only from the interior of a development and garage doors shall be oriented to face away from public streets.
- ◆ Garages should be distributed throughout a development to ensure convenient access from residential units.

- ❖ **Carports** – Where carports are permitted at apartments only, they must follow the same criteria for spatial arrangement as parking courts. Carports may be incorporated with patio walls or used to define public and private open space, but incorporating carports into exterior project walls adjacent to streets is prohibited. The ends of each cluster of carports shall be landscaped if visible from public or private streets, or adjacent properties.

- ❖ **Mailboxes** – Groups of mailboxes shall be provided within the interior of multiple-family residential developments to maximize efficient pedestrian access.

❖ **Usable Open Space**

- ◆ All usable open space areas shall have appropriate lighting and be regularly maintained.
- ◆ All residential units shall have safe and efficient access to usable public or private open space that affords opportunity for recreation and/or social activities. The design and orientation of these areas should be sheltered

from the wind, noise and traffic on adjacent streets, and incompatible uses to a reasonable extent.

- ◆ Required common open spaces shall be conveniently and centrally located to the majority of units in the development to promote a sense of community. Open space areas located within center courtyards are encouraged to provide residents with privacy and security.
 - ◆ Undifferentiated, empty outdoor open spaces shall be avoided.
 - ◆ Common usable open spaces and children's play areas shall be visible from individual units and/or shared facilities such as laundry facilities and community rooms to provide passive visual surveillance. They shall be linked to the internal pedestrian system of the development as well.
 - ◆ Fencing, walls, landscaping or other mechanisms should be used to define the boundaries between public and private outdoor open space.
- ❖ **Dwelling Unit Access.** The use of long, monotonous access balconies and corridors to provide access to five (5) or more units shall be prohibited. Instead, access points to units should be clustered in groups of four units or less. To the extent possible, the entrances to individual units shall be plainly visible from nearby parking areas and/or streets as applicable. The use of distinctive architectural elements and materials to denote individual entrances is encouraged. Individual units located adjacent to a public street should be generally oriented to the street and include an entry feature such as porch that provides direct access to the street where possible.
- ❖ **Mass and Scale.** The scale of such projects shall be considered within the context of their surroundings. Large projects should be broken up into groups of structures. Buildings should avoid appearing like one large, undifferentiated mass by incorporating appropriate visual complexity. Multi-family developments should be designed to provide as many residential units as reasonably feasible within prescribed density limitations with individual identities. The use of single “mega-structures” shall be avoided in favor of structures that have a “human” scale through implementation of the following standards:
- ◆ Eliminate box-like forms with large, unvaried roofs by using a variety of building forms and roof-shapes. This may be accomplished by creating clusters of units, variations in height, setback, and roof shape.
 - ◆ Combinations of one-, two-, and three-story elements on the same building are encouraged to create visual diversity.
 - ◆ Where multi-family projects are located adjacent to single-family residential areas, the taller elements of buildings should increasingly step back from adjacent single-family residences to provide attractive transition between structures and to reduce the visual appearance of mass.

- ◆ Elements such as hipped and gable roof projections and varying recessions should be considered to provide visual relief of mass and bulk.
- ◆ Orient buildings toward the street in a manner that continues the streetscape established in adjacent residential areas.
- ◆ Architectural elements such as chimneys, balconies, porches, and pot shelves (consistent with the architectural style) should be provided for visual diversity.
- ◆ To the extent feasible, entrances to individual units should be plainly visible from the street.
- ◆ Units and buildings should be sited to maximize view opportunities to open spaces. The number of windows should be maximized to enhance view opportunities and make interior spaces feel larger.

Architecture. The following architectural standards apply to multi-family residential development in the Plan area:

- ❖ **Facade and Roof Articulation** - Long, unbroken facades and box-like forms shall be avoided for all multi-family units. To the extent possible, each of the units shall be individually recognizable. For the façades and roofs, variation of planes and heights and the inclusion of elements such as balconies, porches, arcades, dormers and cross gables ameliorate the box-like appearance of long, flat walls and roofs of excessive height. Secondary hipped or gabled roofs covering the entire mass of a building are preferable to mansard roofs or segments of pitched roof applied at the structure's edge. The architectural design of structures shall consider the following:
 - ◆ All building elevations shall be finished appropriately so as to provide continuity. Material changes are strongly encouraged to be accompanied by changes in plane.
 - ◆ Articulate building facades to portray a human scale that assigns identity to individual dwelling units.
 - ◆ Each building elevation should be designed with a proper visual balance and sense of cohesion, and all elevations, not just the front elevation, should have detailing appropriate to the style.
 - ◆ Incorporate building elements that provide architectural interest.
 - ◆ Varied ridge heights should be utilized to create offsets in the ridgeline to better articulate roof forms and building massing.
 - ◆ Roof colors and composition should vary within a project to add visual diversity.
 - ◆ Roof colors should generally be a neutral earth tone, avoiding high-contrast colors such as red, oranges or ceramic blue.
 - ◆ Roof materials should be concrete, clay, heavy asphalt shingle, or other fire resistant materials.

- ◆ Roof forms, materials and colors of garages or other detached structures should be designed to reflect the character and materials of the primary structure.

❖ **Materials and Colors**

- ◆ Stucco and combinations of stucco, stone or materials of a wood-like appearance, having the necessary fire retardant characteristics, are encouraged for exterior surfaces. Exterior building and roofing colors shall be appropriate to and enhance the architectural style and materials of the structure. Large areas of intense primary color will generally be avoided, as subdued colors are more appropriate for the structure's dominant overall color.
- ◆ Use of stucco on larger mass buildings should be broken up or mixed with other materials.
- ◆ Wherever possible, maintain the number of colors that appear on the structure's exterior at two or three to offer some accent but not so much as to make it aesthetically displeasing.
- ◆ Accent color should be used for shutters, awnings, trim, fascia, balcony rails, inlaid tile bands or cornice bands, and should relate to the architectural form and character of the building.
- ◆ Materials selected for multi-family projects shall be durable, require low maintenance, and be suitable for the local arid climate. Piecemeal embellishment and frequent changes in materials shall be avoided, and a palette of materials that convey an image of quality and durability shall be used. Painted surfaces shall reinforce and be compatible with the architectural style of the buildings.

- ❖ **Exterior Stairs** – When provided, simple, clean, bold projections of stairways are encouraged to complement the architectural massing and form of the multi-family structure. Stairways shall be of smooth stucco, plaster, or wood, with accent trim of complementary colors and railings appropriate to the architectural style of the residential structure. Slender, open metal, prefabricated stairs are not allowed.

❖ **Accessory Structures**

- ◆ Carports, detached garages and other accessory structures shall be designed as an integral part of the architecture of projects. They shall be similar in materials, colors and detail to the principal structure(s) of a development
- ◆ Carports garages and other accessory structures shall have a roof design and pitch which complements the principal residential structure.

- ◆ A carport's vertical support structure shall have sufficient mass to be visually as well as structurally harmonious with the roof structure. Thin, unsubstantial appearing posts or poles shall be avoided.
- ◆ Where garages are provided, doors shall appear set into walls rather than flush with the exterior wall.

- ❖ **Solar Panels.** Solar panels shall be integrated into the roof design to be flush with the roof slope or fixed to a sloping support structure for a flat roof. Frames shall be colored to match roof colors. A natural aluminum finish is strongly discouraged. Any mechanical equipment shall be enclosed and completely screened from view.

- ❖ **Additional Building Components**
 - ◆ Exposed gutters and downspouts should be painted to complement or match adjacent roof, fascia, trim or wall colors and not detract from the design of the building.
 - ◆ No exterior antennas are allowed with the exception of satellite television dishes with a small diameter so long as they are screened from view from public right-of-way.
 - ◆ All flashing, sheet metal, vents and pipes should be painted to match the adjacent surface.
 - ◆ Skylights should be incorporated into the roof design to provide natural light and passive solar energy. Frame color should blend with the surrounding roof color; natural aluminum frames are not allowed.

Landscape Architecture. Multi-family projects should incorporate landscaping that defines spatial transitions and complements the building architecture to create a livable environment for residents and pleasant views from adjacent public and private areas. The following standards are provided specifically for multi-family development:

- ◆ Paved areas, especially parking lots, should be shaded to the greatest extent feasible.
- ◆ The provision of seating areas is strongly encouraged in landscaped areas. Such areas should be shaded.
- ◆ Landscaping should be used to create transitions between public and private space, and to define pedestrian walkways.
- ◆ Varied surfaces and/or decorative paving should be used to delineate pedestrian facilities from vehicular and parking areas.
- ◆ The landscape architecture design standards for single-family residential development discussed in Section 2.2.4 shall also apply to multi-family residential development.

Trash Enclosures. Trash enclosures with solid screening shall be distributed throughout a development and sited to allow vehicular access for pick-up vehicles and to minimize visual impact, especially from the public right-of-way.

Screening. The screening design standards for single-family residential development discussed in Section 2.2.4 shall also apply to multi-family residential development.

Fences, Walls, and Hedges. The fences, walls, and hedges design standards for single-family residential development discussed in Section 2.2.4 shall also apply to multi-family residential development.

2.3 Active Adult Residential Neighborhood

2.3.1 Active Adult Residential Neighborhood Plan

The active adult residential neighborhood provides housing for residents typically age 55 and over that seeks an amenity rich, yet secure living environment that is strongly connected to the surrounding community. This private, gated community is located in the southwestern portion of the Plan area and includes an 18-hole executive public golf course. The golf course shall be unrestricted and open to the public. The community includes a variety of housing types, styles, and densities to provide housing opportunities for age-qualified residents at a range of income levels.

The residential portion of the active adult community incorporates the following design principles to promote walkable streets, encourage social interaction, and create a human-scale community: short neighborhood blocks, pedestrian paseos and sidewalks, narrow front setbacks, and building types with front porches and prominent entry features. Nearly all residential units are within a three to five minute walking distance of a private park or recreational facility. This provides opportunity for passive and active recreation and further promotes a strong community based on pedestrian activity and social interaction. The executive golf course includes strong visual connections to the active adult residential neighborhood via paths for pedestrians to facilitate access to this recreational and visual amenity. The golf course also affords the active adult community with impressive public and private views.

The proximity of the active adult community to conventional residential neighborhoods within the plan area offers the age qualified residents the opportunity to live near their children and grandchildren. The community also affords residents with convenient access to neighborhood commercial services. The multitude of community amenities, in combination with the walkable, human scale residential neighborhood design, provides residents with an active lifestyle, high quality of life, and a strong community in a visually pleasing golf course setting.

The private HOA facility is located on approximately 12 acres at the heart of the active adult community. The HOA facility should provide for passive and active recreation,

social interaction opportunities, community meeting space, and other associated uses as described in Section 2.6 – Parks.

If market conditions preclude the development of the active adult community, a gated, conventional residential neighborhood may be built in its place. Development of the gated, conventional residential neighborhood would be similar to that proposed for the active adult community. Under this alternative, the area occupied by the HOA facility would be developed with conventional residential units. Additionally, an approximate 12-acre elementary school site would also be provided to accommodate the additional students generated by non-age restricted housing units. The 940 dwelling unit cap for the active adult community would also apply to the gated, conventional residential neighborhood alternative and shall not be exceeded.

2.3.2 Active Adult Residential Land Use and Development Standards

The following use regulations and development and design standards for the active adult community would also apply to the gated, conventional residential neighborhood alternative.

Use Regulations

The detached single-family units on lots equal to or greater than 5,000 square feet shall be subject to the residential use regulations for low-density residential lots as set forth in **Table 2-2**. The detached single-family units on lots ranging from 3,500 to 4,999 square feet, and duplex dwelling units (two dwelling units sharing a common wall) on lots ranging in size from 3,200 to 5,999 square feet shall be subject to the residential use regulations for medium-density residential lots as set forth in **Table 2-2**.

Development Standards

The detached single-family dwelling units, including low- and medium-density lots shall be subject to the single-family development standards set forth in **Table 2-3** of Section 2.2.3. The duplex dwelling units shall also be subject to the development standards set forth in **Table 2-3** of Section 2.2.3.

Design Standards

The detached single-family dwelling units, including low- and medium-density shall be subject to the single-family design standards set forth in Section 2.2.4. The duplex dwelling units shall also be subject to the to the development standards set forth in Section 2.2.4.

2.4 Golf Course

2.4.1 Golf Course Plan

The approximately 139-acre, 18-hole, executive public golf course is provided to create visual amenity and recreational opportunity for the residents of Rancho Los Lagos and the region. The golf course is connected to the large community park to create a 180-acre contiguous open space system for the Plan area (**Figure 2-1**). The golf course includes the following features:

- ❖ 18-holes of executive-length golf for Plan area residents and members of the general public;
- ❖ A driving range/practice facility;
- ❖ A clubhouse building (approximately 5,000 sq.ft.) that may include a pro-shop, snack bar, restrooms, office space for golf course employees and other uses associated with operation of the golf course. This facility is provided with a vehicular entrance and approximately 110 public parking spaces and is linked to the active adult community via a multi-use path designed for pedestrians and motorized carts. A screened or enclosed area is provided for golf cart storage and maintenance. An area is also provided for special event pavilions or tents; (See **Figure 2-13** for Golf Clubhouse Area Concept.)
- ❖ Strategically located water features create an enhanced aesthetic experience for users of the course as well as an impressive visual amenity as seen from adjacent residential lots and streets. The water features are provided to celebrate the community's identity as Rancho Los Lagos (Ranch of the Lakes) as well as enhancing the golf experience. The location of the water features will be based on the final golf course design. The current golf course layout includes a total of four to five water features:
 - ◆ Near the primary Plan area entrance at the intersection of Avenida Del Valle and State Route 86. This water feature provides an enhanced entrance to the Plan area and creates a memorable experience for motorists and pedestrians alike. This feature also affords private views to nearby residents and public views of the landscaped golf course to pedestrians within the Plan area and motorists passing the Plan area on State Route 86.
 - ◆ At the entrance to the active adult community near Avenida Del Valle. This feature provides visual interest at the gated entrance to this community, views for the residential units opposite Avenida Del Valle, and public views for users of the adjacent Community Paseo.

- ◆ Adjacent to the private HOA facility and possibly adjacent to the golf clubhouse. These water features afford views for community facilities, nearby mini-parks, and the homeowners in the vicinity.
- ◆ Immediately across the Community Park Street from the community park water feature. This lake is purposely located adjacent to the large community park lake to visually integrate the golf course with the community park to create the appearance of a connected lake and to unify the active adult community and the surrounding elements into one interconnected community. The intent is to create the feeling of going over a bridge between these two water features. This feature also provides enhanced public and private views from the surrounding residential areas.

2.4.2 Golf Course Land Use and Development Standards

Use Regulations

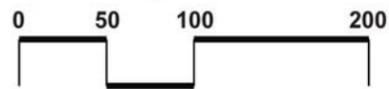
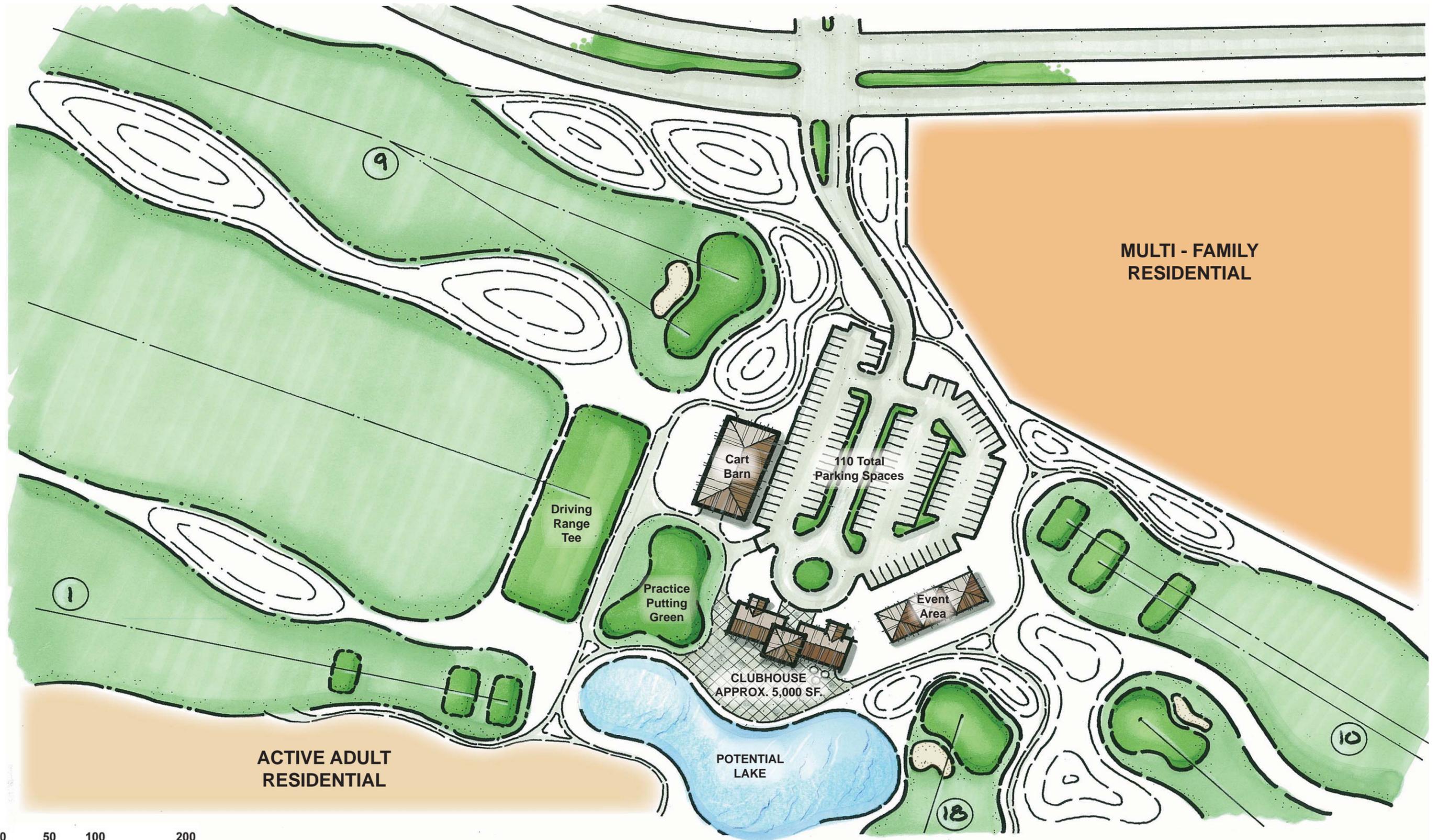
The golf course and associated clubhouse facility (described above) or public open space are the only permitted uses for the land designated for the golf course. Should market conditions dictate that a golf course is infeasible for the site, any open space use with or without public-serving amenities would be permitted, pending approval by the Planning Director as described in Section 8.5.1 – Minor Revisions and Specific Plan Amendments.

Development Standards

The development standards and approximate layout for the golf course shall be as shown on the site plan incorporated in this Specific Plan, or such other site plan as may subsequently be submitted to and approved by the County of Imperial, If such other site plan for a golf course is substantially in conformance with the intention of the development standards herein, a major use permit would not be required for this change.

2.4.3 Golf Course Design Standards

The golf course design, as it fits into the community, is conceptually depicted in **Figure 2-1** Specific Plan Map. A great deal of activity related to the golf course is focused around the clubhouse. A detail of the conceptual clubhouse area illustrates key program components in **Figure 2-13** Golf Clubhouse Area Concept. The actual golf course design may deviate from this conceptual drawing to further enhance the goals of this feature being a visual and recreational amenity. The final design of the golf course shall be subject to the following standards:



Graphic Scale

P&D Consultants/EDAW

Figure 2 -13
Golf Clubhouse Area Concept

Rancho Los Lagos

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- ❖ The clubhouse facility shall be provided with adequate public parking spaces consistent with the County Land Use Ordinance. To the extent feasible, parking spaces associated with the golf course shall be sited and screened so as to minimize or eliminate visibility from Avenida Del Valle. The screening materials shall not constitute uninterrupted blank walls or fences or other features that degrade the quality of the streetscape on Avenida Del Valle.
- ❖ Netting or other transparent features shall be used to protect residential areas and the public-right-of-way from errant golf balls where needed. The materials used shall feature a degree of transparency so as to not degrade public and private views of the golf course.
- ❖ The golf course shall be designed in a manner that does not detract from the character of adjacent residential uses.
- ❖ To the extent feasible, public and private views of the golf course should not be obstructed; public and private views shall be enhanced where feasible.
- ❖ Paths, paseos, or other facilities designed to accommodate pedestrians, golf carts and the like shall be provided to connect the holes, clubhouse facility, and adjacent residential areas. These facilities are encouraged to be defined and accented with appropriate landscape materials, decorative paving, etc.
- ❖ The golf course shall be landscaped with a mixture of drought-tolerant species and oasis-style plantings to minimize water demand.
- ❖ Landscaping should be used to provide subtle yet visible transitions between the golf course and adjacent public and private property such as public parks and residential neighborhoods.

2.5 Mixed Use Commercial

2.5.1 Mixed Use Commercial Concept

This section of the Plan discusses the mixed use commercial element of the commercial/multi-family mixed use land use designation. The mixed use commercial area provides conveniently accessible basic amenities and services to residents of the Rancho Los Lagos Specific Plan area and drive-by customers from SR-86. Appropriate commercial uses include, but are not limited to, coffee shops, bakeries, ice cream parlors, video stores, dry cleaners, pharmacies, convenience stores, and grocery stores. Office uses on ground or higher floors can include but are not limited to doctor or dentist offices, small business or other general business services.

Commercial development is located adjacent to residential development within a mixed use area in order to integrate different land uses within the Plan area. These uses are integrated through the use of unified architectural and landscaping themes for both

residential and commercial structures, and human-scale design with strong pedestrian orientation. Additionally, strong pedestrian connections are intended to link the commercial and residential land uses within this mixed use area and adjacent areas. The mixed use commercial area also provides opportunity for vertical mixed use development in the form of office uses or residential units above ground-floor commercial uses. The opportunity to mix commercial, residential and office uses is provided to allow for economic flexibility as market conditions change over time, and to provide opportunity for development of a vibrant, mixed use neighborhood center filled with activity throughout the day.

2.5.2 Mixed Use Commercial Development Standards

Use Regulations

Mixed use commercial development in the Plan area is subject to the C-1 zone use regulations of the County of Imperial Land Use Ordinance. The C-1 zone is intended to provide for restricted neighborhood commercial needs including business and professional offices and limited retail stores to serve local residents. In addition to uses permitted in the C-1 zoning area, kiosks and second and third-story office space or residential units above ground floor commercial or office uses, shall also be permitted.

Development Standards

Table 2-6 identifies the development standards for mixed use commercial development in the Rancho Los Lagos Specific Plan area. These standards apply only to vertical mixed uses including a mixture of residential and non-residential uses on the same parcel.

Table 2-6
Mixed Use Commercial Development Standards

Development Standard	Mixed Use Commercial
Minimum building/structure setback from road	20'
Minimum building/structure setback from lot line	15'
Minimum building/structure setback from adjacent building/structure	15'
Maximum building/structure height	3 stories/45'
Maximum Commercial Floor Area Ratio	0.35
Minimum off-street parking required	Pursuant to the County of Imperial Land Use Ordinance based on proposed use. In addition, parking areas for commercial uses in residential mixed use developments shall be segregated from residential parking areas.
Additional regulations	Mixed use commercial development is also subject to any standard not specifically addressed by this Plan but regulated by the Land Use Ordinance.

Previous **Table 2-5** describes the residential portion of the commercial/multi-family mixed use area development standards that could occur in this portion of the Plan area. **Table 2-7** in Section 2.6.2 describes the commercial development standards for stand alone commercial uses within or outside of the mixed use area.

2.5.3 Mixed Use Commercial Design Standards

The following design standards are intended to assist the designer in understanding the requirements pertaining to mixed use commercial development within the Rancho Los Lagos Specific Plan. These mandatory standards provide examples of potential design solutions and interpretations of the various mandatory regulations. These standards ensure the highest level of design quality while at the same time providing the flexibility necessary to encourage creativity on the part of project designers. These standards are also intended to promote development that is walkable, safe, and representative of traditional neighborhood design principles.

General Design Principles – The following identifies general design principles for mixed use commercial development.

- ❖ **Desirable Elements** – The qualities and design elements for commercial and mixed use commercial structures and developments that are most desirable include:
 - ◆ Variation in building profile;
 - ◆ Richness of surface and texture;
 - ◆ Significant wall articulation (i.e., insets, canopies, wing walls, trellises, etc.);
 - ◆ Pedestrian-orientation with a “human” scale;
 - ◆ Variation in sloped roof elements and cornice treatments;
 - ◆ Roof overhangs, arcades, awnings, and prominent/attractive entry features;
 - ◆ Regular or traditional window rhythm;
 - ◆ Outdoor dining areas;
 - ◆ Public art;
 - ◆ The use of trees, awnings, trellises, or other elements to provide shade;
 - ◆ Articulated mass and bulk;
 - ◆ Transparency;
 - ◆ Significant landscape and hardscape elements;
 - ◆ Prominent access driveways;
 - ◆ Street oriented primary building entrances;
 - ◆ Windows, doors, and balconies placed to facilitate natural surveillance;
 - ◆ Landscaped and screened parking;

- ◆ Comprehensive sign programs; and
- ◆ Orientation of buildings to the street.

❖ **Undesirable Elements** - The following elements are to be avoided:

- ◆ Large blank, monotonous and unarticulated wall surfaces that contribute little to the streetscape and discourage natural surveillance;
- ◆ Highly reflective surfaces;
- ◆ Metal siding on the main facade;
- ◆ Plastic siding;
- ◆ Large Square “boxlike” structures;
- ◆ Mix of unrelated styles (e.g., rustic wood shingles and polished chrome);
- ◆ Large, out of scale signs with flashy colors;
- ◆ Visible outdoor storage, loading, trash, and equipment areas; and
- ◆ Disjointed parking areas and confusing circulation patterns.

Site Planning - The following site planning standards are to be followed:

- ❖ Structures and other improvements should be sited in a manner that maximizes visibility of public areas (e.g., parking lots, plazas), and streets and alleys to maximize opportunities for people engaged in their normal behavior to observe the space around them.
- ❖ Buildings should be designed with the primary entrance oriented toward the street. Direct pedestrian access from sidewalks and paseos to building entrances shall be provided.
- ❖ When appropriate, new structures should be clustered to create plazas or pedestrian malls to prevent long “barracks-like” rows of structures. When clustering is impractical, a visual link between separate structures should be established through the use of an arcade system, trellis or other open structure. Multiple buildings on the site should have a strong spatial and functional relationship between them and are encouraged to have strong unifying pedestrian connections.
- ❖ Structures are to be sited in a manner that complements adjacent structures.
- ❖ Structures and on-site circulation systems shall be located to minimize pedestrian/vehicle conflicts where feasible. Structures should be linked to the public sidewalk with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)/Title 29 compliant textured paving.

- ❖ Landscaping and shade structures such as pergolas should be used to enhance the areas adjacent to structures.
- ❖ Where provided, spaces between structures should be utilized as pedestrian accessible areas with clear, recognizable shapes that reflect careful planning. Such spaces should provide amenities such as shade, benches, or fountains.
- ❖ Pedestrian walkways with enhanced paving and landscaping are encouraged. Such walkways should provide direct access from sidewalks or paseos to primary building entrances.
- ❖ Open space is to be combined where possible into larger aggregate, landscaped areas rather than equally distributing them into areas of low impact such as at building peripheries, behind a structure or in other areas of little impact to the public view.

Fences and Walls – Fences and walls shall be designed pursuant to the following standards:

- ❖ Except where required for a specific screening or security purpose, high walls shall not be used within commercial areas. When used, the intent is to keep the walls as low as possible while performing their screening and security functions.
- ❖ Where walls are used along property frontages, or screen walls are to be used to conceal storage and equipment areas, they should be designed to be compatible with surrounding architecture.
- ❖ Both sides of all perimeter walls or fences should be architecturally treated when visible from public or private streets and public areas such as parking lots and plazas. Landscaping should be used in combination with such walls wherever possible.
- ❖ When security fencing is used, it should be a combination of solid walls with pillars and decorative view ports, or short solid wall segments and wrought iron grill work.
- ❖ Long expanses of fence or wall surfaces should be offset or architecturally designed to prevent monotony. The use of contrasting elements and materials, such as tile, stone, or brick, or otherwise interesting design, is strongly encouraged to break up long expanses of fence or wall surfaces.
- ❖ Landscape pockets or vines on vertical surfaces should be integrated into fencing or screening the development as appropriate whenever feasible.

Mass and Scale

- ❖ Promote commercial structures with human scale through building articulation, orientation, and architectural elements such as porches, arcades, and windows to break up the mass. Building scale can be reduced to human-scale through the proper use of window patterns, structural bays, roof overhangs, siding, awnings, moldings, fixtures and other details.
- ❖ The scale of buildings should be carefully related to adjacent pedestrian areas (e.g., courtyards) and other structures.
- ❖ Large dominating structures should be broken up visually by: creating horizontal emphasis through the use of trim; adding three-dimensional architectural elements; and using combinations of complementary colors and landscape materials.

Architecture – Mixed use commercial development is subject to the following architectural standards:

- ❖ **Architectural Design** - Avoid the appearance of massive, bulky structures with implementation of the following measures:
 - ◆ Vary the planes of the exterior walls in depth and/or direction. Wall planes should not run in a continuous direction for more than 50 feet without an offset proportional to the building size or an architectural feature such as a column to provide visual interest.
 - ◆ Building height should be varied so that it appears to be divided into distinct massing elements.
 - ◆ Two-story structures should convey visual transition from the ground floor to the second floor through change in materials, colors, awnings, or other techniques to create human-scale.
 - ◆ Building facades should be articulated by use of color, arrangement of facade elements or a change in materials.
 - ◆ Landscaping and architectural detailing should be used at the ground floor level to lessen the impact of an otherwise bulky building.
 - ◆ Recessed entries, arcades, and covered awnings are encouraged to provide human scale pedestrian orientation.
 - ◆ Blank walls should be avoided at the ground floor levels. Utilize windows, trellises, wall articulation, arcades, change in materials, or other features.
 - ◆ All building facades visible from public streets and public areas (such as parking areas) should be architecturally treated.

- ◆ Upper-story decks, balconies, and similar features are permitted subject to the following:
 - Balconies on the front façade should be located and designed to minimize conflicts with pedestrian traffic on the ground level
 - The scale of balconies shall be compatible with the structure to which they are attached
 - Balconies should not obscure visibility of signs or storefronts.
- ◆ Parapet walls should be used for screening flat roofs and articulating the building design. Such walls should include detailed architectural elements to define the building roofline. Low-pitched roofs with wide, overhanging eaves and decorative brackets may be used in conjunction with parapet walls.

❖ **Colors**

- ◆ Exterior building and roofing colors should be appropriate to and enhance the architectural style and materials of the structure. Large areas of intense primary color should generally be avoided as subdued colors are more appropriate as the dominant overall color for a structure.
- ◆ The color palette chosen for new structures should generally be compatible with the colors of adjacent structures. An exception is where the colors of adjacent structures strongly diverge from these design standards.
- ◆ Wherever possible, minimize the number of colors appearing on the structure's exterior. Primary or bold colors may only be used to accent elements, such as door and window frames and architectural details.
- ◆ Roof flashing, rain gutters, and downspouts, vents, and other roof protrusions should be finished to complement the adjacent materials and/or colors.

- ❖ **Materials** - Materials should be consistently applied on all facades and chosen to work harmoniously with adjacent materials. Piecemeal embellishment and frequent changes in materials should be avoided. Material changes should not occur at external corners, but may occur at reverse or interior corners or if located at least four feet from the edge of external corners.

❖ **Roof Treatments**

- ◆ Mixed use commercial should have varied and interesting roof forms that are consistent with community design standards.
- ◆ All roof top equipment should be screened from public view by screening materials of the same nature as the structure's basic materials. Mechanical equipment should be located below the highest vertical element of the building. Unscreened plain equipment boxes are not acceptable. The following roof materials should not be used: corrugated metal (standing

rib metal roofs are permitted); highly reflective surfaces (copper roofs may be considered); and illuminated roofing.

❖ **Windows and Building Entries**

- ◆ The design and placement of windows shall be consistent for an entire structure.
- ◆ The decoration of windows with architectural elements compatible with the structure's architectural style is encouraged.

❖ **Awnings and Canopies**

- ◆ Awnings/canopies should not be located in a way that obscures transom windows, piers, pilasters, and other architectural building features and should generally be designed to project over individual doors and window openings where feasible.
- ◆ The size of the awning/canopy shall be proportional in scale with the building to which it is attached.
- ◆ The style of the awning/canopy should complement the architectural style of the building to which it is attached. Awnings should generally have a simple horizontal valance if located over rectangular or square window/door openings. Domed or barrel-shaped awnings are appropriate for buildings with arched window/door openings.
- ◆ An awning/canopy with a single, solid color is preferred. The color of the awning/canopy should be compatible with and complement the exterior color(s) of the building.
- ◆ Awnings/canopies should be regularly cleaned and kept free of visible defects and wear.
- ◆ Awnings/canopies with signs shall require the issuance of a Sign Permit in accordance with the County of Imperial Land Use Ordinance.

❖ **Landscape Architecture**

- ◆ Landscaping for commercial uses should be used to define specific areas by helping to focus on entrances to buildings and parking lots, define the edges of various land uses, provide transition between neighboring properties (buffering), and provide screening for loading and equipment areas.
- ◆ Landscaping should be scaled to adjacent structures and be of appropriate size at maturity to accomplish its intended purpose.
- ◆ Landscaping around the base of structures that face streets or parking areas is recommended to soften the edge of the structure. Landscaping should be accented at entrances to provide focus. Loading areas or service zones need not have perimeter landscaping if sufficient setback landscaping is in place.

- ◆ Trees should be located throughout the parking lot and not simply at the ends of parking aisles. In order to be considered within the parking lot, trees should be located in planters that are bounded on at least three sides by parking area paving.
- ◆ Landscaping should be protected from vehicular and pedestrian encroachment by raised planting surfaces, depressed walks or the use of concrete curbs.
- ◆ Vines and climbing plants upon trellises, integrated with buildings, and perimeter walls are strongly encouraged.
- ◆ At maturity, trees should be able to be trimmed 10 feet above ground and shrubs should be maintained at a height of approximately three feet when visibility is a factor.
- ◆ All landscaping shall be irrigated by an automatic system.

Parking and Loading Areas – The following design standards supplement the parking and loading regulations of the County of Imperial Land Use Ordinance.

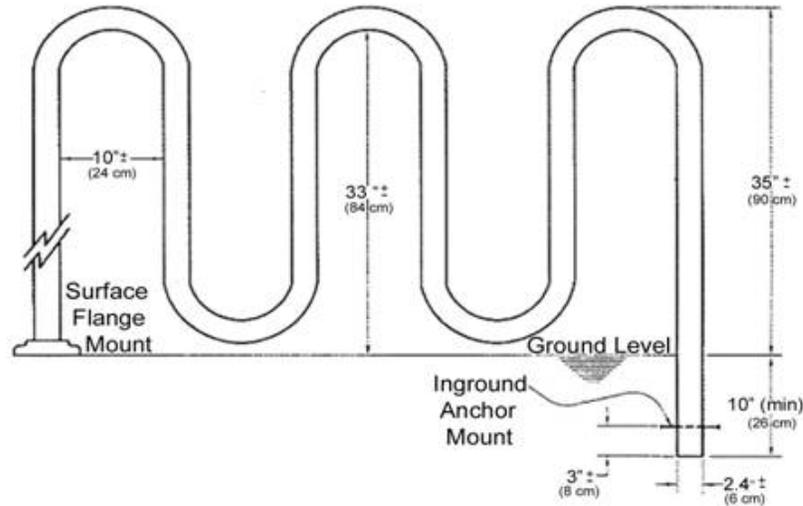
❖ **Parking and Circulation**

- ◆ Parking lot design should consider the following factors: ingress and egress with consideration to possible conflicts with street traffic; pedestrian and vehicular conflicts; on-site circulation and service vehicle zones; and the overall configuration and appearance of the parking area.
- ◆ Parking areas should be placed behind the building at the ground level where feasible. Parking areas should not be located along property frontage adjacent to State Route 86 and Avenida Del Valle to the extent feasible. When visible from the public right-of-way or residential areas, parking areas should be screened to minimize the visibility of parked vehicles from the street.
- ◆ Separate vehicular and pedestrian circulation systems shall be provided. Pedestrian links between uses in commercial developments should be emphasized, including distinct pedestrian access from parking areas in large commercial developments, such as shopping centers. Driveway widths should be minimized and designed with maximum visibility to promote walkable streets.
- ◆ Parking aisles should be separated from vehicle circulation routes whenever possible. Parking areas should be designed so that pedestrians walk parallel to moving cars. The need for pedestrians to cross parking aisles and landscaped areas should be minimized.
- ◆ Parking areas should be landscaped, receiving interior as well as perimeter treatment.
- ◆ Parking areas should be separated from structures by either a raised concrete walkway or landscaped strip, preferably both. Situations where parking spaces directly abut structures should be avoided to the extent feasible.

- ◆ Where parking areas are connected, interior circulation should allow for a similar direction of travel and parking bays in all areas to reduce conflict at points of connection.
- ◆ Parking access points should be located as far as possible from street intersections so that adequate stacking room is provided. The number of access points should be limited to the minimum amount necessary to provide adequate circulation.
- ◆ Parking areas and pedestrian walkways should be visible from structures to the greatest degree possible.
- ◆ Parking areas which accommodate a significant number of vehicles should be divided into a series of connected smaller lots divided by landscaping or buildings.
- ◆ Use an opaque landscaped wall, landscaped berm, or shrub planting to screen any parking which is visible from the street periphery. A combination of walls, berms and landscape material is required when parking abuts a street frontage. Where practical, lowering the grade of the parking lot from existing street elevations may aid in obscuring views of automobiles while promoting views of architectural elements of the structures beyond.
- ◆ Service areas and parking shall be screened from the street and residential areas by trees, massed planting and decorative walls. Service roads should also act as accessible fire lanes.
- ◆ Parking lot landscaping should be used to avoid expansive appearance of parking lots, provide shaded parking areas, and mitigate acoustical impacts of the vehicles.

❖ **Bike Parking**

- ◆ Bike parking must be provided in easily accessible locations from the street and paseo system and building entrance(s) it serves.
- ◆ Bike parking shall be provided in a manner that does not interfere with pedestrian or vehicular circulation and shall be located near building entrances. Bike parking may be provided in a required landscape area provided the parking area is mounted on a concrete pad and direct access to/from the bike parking area is paved.
- ◆ Bike parking facilities should be made out of a durable and strong material, permanently anchored to the ground, and designed such that cyclists can easily secure their bikes.
- ◆ For each bike parking space required, a U-lock compatible, wave type, or other bike rack approved by the County Engineer shall be provided on-site to which a user can secure one wheel and the frame of a bike. An example U-lock compatible, wave type bike rack is shown below.



***U-lock Compatible
Wave-type Bike Rack***

- ◆ The stationary component of a bike rack may be either a freestanding bike rack or a wall-mounted bracket. For long-term parking needs, such as secure bike parking for employees during work hours, bike lockers can be installed on-site to meet the bike parking requirements.
- ◆ Bike parking must be visible from the building it serves and sufficiently illuminated in order to provide security for parked bikes.

Screening

- ❖ Loading facilities, service areas, and mechanical equipment shall be screened from public view to encourage aesthetically pleasing commercial development as follows:
 - ◆ Loading facilities should be located at the rear of the site and screened from public view, when feasible.
 - ◆ Where solid enclosures are required for screening purposes, landscaping should be provided to screen solid enclosures from public view, especially where such areas abut primary streets or residential areas.
- ❖ Mechanical equipment should be located behind a structure or on the roof. Such equipment shall be screened from public view with landscaping, parapet walls, or architectural features consistent with the design guidelines.
- ❖ Screening for outdoor storage (including cart storage and trash enclosures) should be determined by the height of the material or equipment being screened. When allowed by the provisions of the County Land Use Ordinance and this Specific Plan, exterior storage should be confined to portions of the site that are least visible.

- ❖ Where screening is required, a combination of elements should be used including solid masonry walls, berms, and landscaping. Chain link fencing is not permitted. Any outdoor equipment, whether on a roof, side of a structure or on the ground, should be appropriately screened from view. The method of screening should be architecturally integrated with the adjacent structure in terms of materials, color, shape and size. Where several individual pieces of equipment are located, a continuous screen is desirable.

Lighting

- ❖ Exterior lighting shall be provided with the goal of maintaining pedestrian safety and minimizing impacts to adjacent buildings and residential areas. Lighting fixtures should provide visual interest and be compatible with the architectural style and scale of the structure to which such fixtures are attached.
- ❖ The use of exterior lighting to accentuate the building design and highlight architectural details is encouraged. Building entries, sign copy, and addresses should be highlighted with exterior lighting.
- ❖ Flashing, blinking, or extremely bright lights are strongly discouraged.
- ❖ Light shields shall be utilized on all outdoor lighting standards to prevent light from being directed above the horizontal plane and polluting the night sky.

Signage

- ❖ In addition to the County's sign regulations in the Land Use Ordinance, signage for mixed use commercial development should follow the following guidelines:
- ❖ Special signs, pavement and landscape enhancement should be provided at project entrances. Unified landscape and signs consistent with residential development is encouraged. Carefully sited, pedestrian scaled store signs and graphics are encouraged.
- ❖ Large illuminated signs should be comprised of individually cut and internally illuminated letters. Box/can type signs are not allowed. Wall signs may be front lit or have rear halo illumination.

Kiosks

- ❖ Where permitted, kiosks shall incorporate architectural style and color(s) compatible with surrounding buildings.

2.6 Commercial

2.6.1 Commercial Concept

The commercial area of the Rancho Los Lagos Specific Plan provides conveniently accessible basic amenities and services to residents of the Plan area and drive-by customers along Jameson Road, in the northeastern portion of the Plan area. Appropriate retail uses include, but are not limited to, gas/service stations, convenience stores, pharmacies, ice cream parlors, bakeries, video stores, and dry cleaners.

2.6.2 Commercial Development and Design Standards

Use Regulations and Design Standards

Commercial development in the Plan area is subject to the C-1 zone use regulations of the County of Imperial Land Use Ordinance. The C-1 zone is intended to provide for restricted commercial needs including business and professional offices and limited retail stores to serve local residents. The C-1 zone permits such uses as gas stations, food markets, eating establishments, and dry cleaners. The design standards for commercial development are the same as those identified for the mixed use commercial portions of the Rancho Los Lagos Specific Plan detailed in Section 2.5.3.

Development Standards

Table 2-7 identifies the development standards for commercial development in the Rancho Los Lagos Specific Plan area.

Table 2-7
Commercial Development Standards

Development Standard	Commercial
Minimum building/structure setback from roadway	20'
Minimum building/structure setback from lot line	15'
Minimum building/structure setback from adjacent building/structure	15'
Maximum building/structure height	2 stories/35'
Maximum Commercial Floor Area Ratio	0.35
Minimum off-street parking required	Pursuant to the County of Imperial Land Use Ordinance based on proposed use.
Additional regulations	Any standard not specifically addressed by this Plan but regulated by the County Land Use Ordinance shall also apply.

2.7 Specialty Commercial at Community Park

2.7.1 Specialty Commercial at Community Park Concept

The specialty commercial area within the community park of the Rancho Los Lagos Specific Plan area is located adjacent to and west of the community park lake. This area provides restaurants, snack areas and other eating establishments to residents of the Plan area and surrounding communities. Orienting these uses toward the lake is encouraged. Appropriate commercial uses include, but are not limited to, restaurants, ice cream parlors, bakeries and other eating or snack-type establishments. The sale of alcoholic beverages at restaurants within this area will only be permitted at specific locations.

2.7.2 Specialty Commercial at Community Park Development and Design Standards

Use Regulations and Design Standards

Development within the specialty commercial at community park area is subject to the C-1 zone use regulations of the County of Imperial Land Use Ordinance. The C-1 zone is intended to provide for restricted commercial needs including business and professional offices and limited retail stores to serve local residents. The C-1 zone permits such uses as bakeries, cafes, coffee shops, ice cream parlors, restaurants, retail stores, and other eating establishments, and dry cleaners. The design standards for development within the specialty commercial at community park area are the same as those identified for the mixed use commercial portions of the Rancho Los Lagos Specific Plan. Section 2.5.3 details the mixed use commercial design standards.

Development Standards

Table 2-8 identifies the development standards for development in the specialty commercial at community park area of the Rancho Los Lagos Specific Plan.

Table 2-8
Specialty Commercial at Community Park Development Standards

Development Standard	Specialty Commercial at Community Park
Minimum building/structure setback from roadway	20'
Minimum building/structure setback from lot line	15'
Minimum building/structure setback from adjacent building/structure	15'
Maximum building/structure height	2 stories/35'
Minimum off-street parking required	Pursuant to the County of Imperial Land Use Ordinance based on proposed use.
Additional regulations	Any standard not specifically addressed by this Plan but regulated by the County Land Use Ordinance shall also apply.

2.8 Parks

2.8.1 Mini-, Neighborhood, and Community Parks Plan

The Rancho Los Lagos Specific Plan provides three types of public parks, a public golf course, and an HOA facility to encourage active recreation, social interaction, and passive enjoyment. The golf course also affords the community an impressive visual amenity. The three types of public parks and the HOA Facility serve as focal points within the different sub-areas of the conventional residential neighborhood and the active adult community. The Community Park and/or neighborhood parks may contain private HOA facilities within their boundaries. Selected mini-parks may also be developed entirely as private HOA facilities. Any HOA facility will not be included in the park credit calculation as illustrated in **Table 5-3** in Chapter 5 – Public Services and Facilities.

The residential neighborhoods are strategically located in relation to the extensive system of parks and recreation facilities to encourage a walkable community. **Figure 2-14** Walkable Community Diagram illustrates this pedestrian friendly community concept upon which the Plan is based.

The convenient location of public open space is an important complement to a community containing compact lots. All the residents are located very close to these parks that provide abundant open space. The walkable community concept:

- ❖ Promotes healthy lifestyles;
- ❖ Reduces local vehicle traffic; and
- ❖ Promotes safety and security through increased social interaction.

The emphasis on public open space also fosters opportunity for social interaction and promotes strong community bonds and increased neighborhood identity. The conventional residential neighborhood and the active adult community are designed such that all residents are within five minutes or less walking distance to public parks and/or private recreation facilities and the opportunities for active and passive recreation, and social interaction which they afford. The convenient distribution of parks in relation to each neighborhood is illustrated in **Figure 2-15** Walking Distance Diagram.

The three types of public parks include: the community park; 6 neighborhood parks; and approximately 17 mini-parks. The locations of these parks are depicted graphically in **Figure 5-1** (Chapter 5). The centrally-located community park is intended to serve both the Rancho Los Lagos community and the surrounding region.

A system of smaller neighborhood parks and mini-parks radiates from the community park throughout the sub-areas of the conventional residential neighborhood to provide recreation and social interaction within walking distance of all homes. The neighborhood

parks are smaller than the community park and function as focal points, neighborhood centers, and casual meeting places for the residential neighborhoods surrounding the community park.

The mini-parks provide additional park space to ensure that nearly all residents are within a three to five minute walk of open space. An extensive pedestrian paseo, paseo, and walkway system connects the individual parks and recreational facilities into a cohesive open space system that facilitates the pedestrian-oriented character of the community.

The active adult community is designed around a centrally placed private HOA facility, the executive golf course, and a series of mini-parks distributed throughout. The golf course is open to the public and contributes to the Plan area's abundant opportunities for social interaction and recreation. However, use of the HOA facility will be restricted to residents of the private, gated active adult community. The HOA facility would not be provided in the gated, conventional residential neighborhood alternative.

HOA Facility

The private HOA facility is a major amenity of the active adult neighborhood component of the Rancho Los Lagos Specific Plan and serves as the focal point of that neighborhood. The HOA facility should provide for passive and active recreation and social interaction opportunities both indoors and outdoors, community meeting space, and other associated uses.

The following special features and amenities are suggested as potential uses of space within the HOA facility: community information center; sports courts; pool facilities; playground; active and passive recreation areas; barbeque area; shaded picnic areas; clubhouse. However, the specific uses provided within the HOA facility shall be determined by the project developer and are not prescribed by this Specific Plan. The HOA facility would not be provided in the gated, conventional residential neighborhood alternative.

Community Park

The approximately 42-acre community park, as the focal point of the residential neighborhoods and entire Rancho Los Lagos Specific Plan area, will provide a variety of amenities and significant open space to both residents of the community and surrounding areas. As the largest park in the Plan area, it will contain various opportunities for both active and passive recreation. Additionally, restaurants and snack areas oriented toward the lake are encouraged. The sale of alcoholic beverages at restaurants within the community park will only be permitted at specific locations. The community park also contains an approximately 5-acre lake which will serve as the central identifying element of the community.

Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood parks vary from approximately 3 to 5 acres in size. They serve as focal points within the sub-areas of the conventional residential neighborhood. These parks provide a variety of amenities and open space to the residents of Rancho Los Lagos and the surrounding areas. Proposed features of these parks will include open space for active recreation as well as areas for passive recreation. Special features and specific themed elements are located within these parks to further enhance the character and identity of the sub-area that each park serves.

Two of the neighborhood parks have been designed as joint-use school and park sites. These neighborhood parks are located immediately adjacent to school sites to encourage the joint use of these facilities after school hours. This allows for larger areas within the Plan area to be used for recreation after school hours.

Mini-Parks

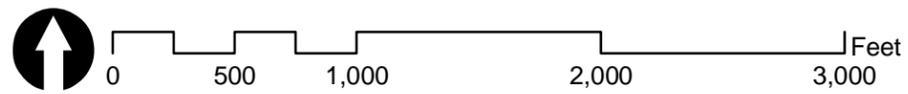
Mini-parks are typically less than one acre in size and provide a variety of amenities at convenient locations throughout the conventional residential neighborhood and active adult community for the use of nearby residents. These parks will not be characterized by large playing fields as the community park and neighborhood parks but will provide passive open space and smaller amenities for passive recreation. Potential amenities include, but are not limited to, seating areas, picnic areas, and children's tot lots or playgrounds.

LEGEND

-  Project Boundary
-  Planning Area
-  Railroad
-  Lake/Canal
-  Park
-  H.O.A. Facility
-  Golf Course
-  Open Space
-  3 Minute Walking Distance (660')
-  5 Minute Walking Distance (1,320')



Source: P&D Consultants in conjunction with EDAW, 2007; 2008; 2009



P&D Consultants/EDAW

Path: P:\2006\06261892 Rancho Los Lagos Specific Plan\SGIS\MXD\specific_plan_figures_rev201103\WkDistDiag_201103_v4.mxd, 03/07/11, LeeJ

County of Imperial

Figure 2-15
Walking Distance Plan

Rancho Los Lagos

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2.8.2 Parks Development Standards

Use Regulations

Table 2-9 shows the recommended and required uses for parks within the Rancho Los Lagos Specific Plan area. If a use is not identified, it is not permitted unless approved during the site plan review process.

Table 2-9
Parks Use Regulations

Amenity	Community Park	Neighborhood Parks	Mini-Parks
Parking, Drop-off/Pick-up	Parking lots and drop-off/pick-up drives. The required number of parking spaces shall be determined during the site plan review process.	Parking lots and drop-off/pick-up drives. The required number of parking spaces shall be determined during the site plan review process.	Not required or recommended.
Sports Fields	Fields such as baseball and soccer fields are appropriate uses. These uses are subject to the lighting regulations described below.	Fields such as baseball and soccer fields are appropriate uses. These uses are subject to the lighting regulations described below.	Not required or recommended.
Themed Elements	Special features and themed elements compatible with the Community's overall image are recommended. These uses shall be subject to the lighting regulations described below.	Special features and specific themed elements located within the parks to further enhance the character and identity of the each neighborhood. These uses shall be subject to the lighting regulations described below.	No specific theme is required; however, architectural features of any structures should be compatible in scale, mass, and color with surrounding development.
Passive Open Space	A community plaza and open space shall be provided. An amphitheater may also be appropriate. These uses shall be subject to the lighting regulations described below.	A neighborhood plaza and open space are appropriate. These uses shall be subject to the lighting regulations described below.	Passive open space is an integral feature of the Mini-Park. Passive open space shall provide extensive shade through landscaping and structures, such as picnic shade structures and gazebos or pergolas.

**Table 2-9
Parks Use Regulations**

Amenity	Community Park	Neighborhood Parks	Mini-Parks
Courts	Hard surface sports courts such as basketball and tennis courts are recommended. These uses shall be subject to the lighting regulations described below.	Hard surface sports courts such as basketball and tennis courts are appropriate. These uses shall be subject to the lighting regulations described below.	A full or half sport court is appropriate. This use shall be subject to the lighting regulations described below.
Dog Run	Fenced, off-leash dog run areas are permitted.	Not recommended.	Not permitted.
4H Facilities	4H pavilion is permitted.	Not permitted.	Not permitted.
Restrooms	Restrooms and changing room/locker facilities are recommended.	Restroom facilities are permitted, but not required.	Not permitted.
Night Lighting	Night lighting shall require a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to ensure spillage is reduced. All park and open space lighting shall be fully shielded (i.e., no light is emitted above the horizontal plane on which the light is located) to provide a dark night sky. Intermittent sports field lighting shall be excepted from this requirement.		
Storm Water Management	Where feasible, passive open space landscape areas may be used for detention. The area used for temporary detention shall not exceed 40 percent of the total park area.		

Development Standards

Table 2-10 provides the development standards for the community park, neighborhood parks, and mini-parks.

**Table 2-10
Parks Development Standards**

Development Standard	Community Park	Neighborhood Parks	Mini-Parks
Minimum building/structure setback from roadway	15'	15'	15'
Minimum building/structure setback from lot line	15'	15'	15'
Minimum building/structure setback from adjacent structure	15'	15'	15'
Maximum building/structure height	30' ¹	18'	15'
Minimum Parking	See Table 2-8	See Table 2-8	Not required.

¹ A central thematic tower is excepted from the maximum height requirement and may achieve a maximum height of 40 feet if provided.

2.8.3 Parks Design Standards

Architecture

Architecture within parks should be compatible with surrounding development in terms of mass, scale, color, and theme.

Landscaping

The majority of landscaping should consist of an appropriate balance of drought-tolerant, desert plant species and higher water use ‘oasis’ plant species. Irrigated turf grass fields are permitted. Landscaping should also incorporate shade, enhanced ground cover, and open space areas that provide recreational opportunities.

Soft Ground Cover

Soft ground cover should be used in open grass areas, ball fields, tot lots, and paths. Passive soft ground cover areas within a park may also serve as storm water detention areas as described below.

Detention Facilities

To adequately handle sporadic rain events, the Plan area may utilize temporary detention facilities in some areas of the parks to supplement the dedicated detention basins located throughout the Plan area. Refer to the **Figure 6-3**, Storm Drainage Master Plan.

These detention facilities prevent flooding from occurring in the community and save on maintenance costs that would otherwise be needed to repair flood damage. These detention facilities are located within passive activity areas characterized by open spaces of grass and/or vegetative groundcover such as the outfield of a baseball facility or informal turf grass areas. Detention facilities within a park shall not exceed 40 percent of the total park area. The final location and configuration of all detention facilities within parks will be determined by a civil engineer.

Lighting

Public recreational facilities lighting should include fully shielded fixtures to minimize the emission of light into the night sky and neighboring properties. The lighting of private recreational facilities such as basketball courts, tennis courts, and ball fields on individual residential lots shall not be permitted. Swimming pools may be internally lit for safety purposes. Private community HOA facilities may illuminate courts with proper shielding, if approved through a CUP.

Parking

Parking lots should be designed and lighted with shielded fixtures to ensure pedestrian safety. Parking facilities should have safe and easily accessible drop-off and pick up areas.

Screening

Any heating or cooling equipment or other mechanical equipment (whether on the roof, side of structure or ground) as well as any loading or trash dumpster area, should be screened. The method of screening should be architecturally compatible in terms of materials, color, shape, and size and should blend with the building design. If landscaping is used, evergreen plant material shall be spaced at an appropriate density to provide full screening.

2.9 Schools

2.9.1 Local Neighborhood Schools Plan

The Plan area includes two elementary schools to provide for the educational needs of local residents. The location of these school sites is shown in **Figure 5-1** (Chapter 5). Both of these schools are sited as joint use facilities with neighborhood parks. This allows for school recreation facilities to be used for public recreation after school hours. Both school sites are connected to the system of Community Paseos. If market conditions preclude the development of an active adult community, a gated, conventional (student-generating) residential community would be located in this area and necessitate the inclusion of another school site.

The elementary school sites shall have an underlying Low-Density Single-Family residential zone with minimum 5,000sf lot size as described in Section 2.2.3 of this Specific Plan. In the event the elementary school district fails to acquire a designated school site within the time of the development of the respective phase of development within which the site is located, the site shall be permitted to develop for residential use pursuant to the underlying zoning and the provisions of Section 8.2.4 of this Specific Plan, so long as the total number of dwelling units within the Plan area with the residential use of the site(s) does not exceed 3,830.

2.9.2 Schools Land Use and Development Standards

Use Regulations

All school buildings and facilities shall be designed in conformance with the requirements of the State architect. If a site is not used for a school as decided by the appropriate school district, the site may be developed as single-family detached residential units on lots no smaller than 5,000 square feet.

Development Standards

All school buildings and facilities shall be developed in conformance with the requirements of the State architect.

2.9.3 School/Park Design Standards

Although the County of Imperial has no approval authority over the design of school facilities, the following design standards represent the County's desires for the development of quality schools that reflect their importance as central features within the community.

Architecture

School architecture should be designed compatible with surrounding development and to ensure continuity between both Plan area schools. Each school should choose architecture, materials, and colors based on a common theme that should blend with the architecture, materials, and colors of the surrounding community.

Building Elevations

Building elevations should be harmonious and compatible with the design elements of the architectural style of the building. Each elevation should be designed with a proper visual balance, a sense of cohesion, and all elevations of a building should have detailing appropriate to the style, not just the front elevation.

Façade and Roof Architecture

Roof forms, materials and colors of primary buildings and detached accessory structures should be designed to reflect the character and materials of the primary structure. Roof pitch may vary according to the style.

Accessory Structures

The design of accessory structures should be architecturally compatible with the principal structure through the use of consistent architectural style, exterior building and roofing colors and materials, and landscaping.

Screening

Any heating, cooling or other mechanical equipment, whether on the roof, side of structure or ground as well as any loading or trash dumpster area, should be screened. The method of screening should be architecturally compatible in terms of materials, color, shape, and size and should blend with the building design. If landscaping is used, evergreen plant material shall be spaced at an appropriate density to provide full screening.

Pedestrian Paths

All schools should be directly linked to the pedestrian and bicycle facilities that traverse the Plan area (**Figure 3-23**). The linking of elementary schools with pedestrian facilities improves the walkability of the community.

Fencing

Special use pilasters and fencing are encouraged. Fencing should be constructed of materials, colors, and textures that are consistent throughout the development and are in harmony with the overall theme and character of the development. Such fencing reinforces the identity of the community and creates a visual continuity that contributes to the community's aesthetic quality. Where chain link fencing is used, black vinyl clad fencing is strongly encouraged.

Lighting

Lighting should be designed to minimize the emission of light into the night sky and minimize emission onto adjacent properties. Fully shielded lighting fixtures are recommended.

Ingress/Egress

Ingress and egress points should coordinate with proposed roadway alignments and allow for safe pedestrian crossings and appropriate intersection spacing.

Recreational Uses

Recreational use areas associated with each school are encouraged to be sited near the adjacent neighborhood parks and away from any adjacent residential units to minimize noise impacts to surrounding residences, where feasible. Active play areas should be designed with tot-lots, baseball fields, soccer fields, basketball courts, handball courts, playground equipment, and other amenities. All recreational areas should be designed in conformance with the programming requirements of the State architect.

2.10 Business Park

2.10.1 Business Park Plan

The Rancho Los Lagos Specific Plan provides land for business park uses that support the County's economic development and create some opportunities for employment. The business park may also include public facilities that provide needed infrastructure in support of the community's long-term development and viability. The business park parcel consists of approximately 97 acres in the eastern portion of the Plan area and is separated from the remainder of the Plan area by the Southern Pacific Railroad right-of-way.

2.10.2 Business Park Land Use and Development Standards

Use Regulations

Allowable uses within the business park include:

- ❖ Storage;
- ❖ Recreational vehicle (RV) storage / RV Park;
- ❖ Miniature golf course;
- ❖ Bowling alley;
- ❖ Religious facilities;
- ❖ Indoor shooting range/gun club;
- ❖ Wholesaling;
- ❖ Warehousing and distribution;
- ❖ Nursery;
- ❖ Large-scale warehouse retail;
- ❖ Business and professional office uses;
- ❖ Water park;
- ❖ Light manufacturing; and
- ❖ Public uses including a potential domestic water treatment plant, wastewater treatment plant and/or an electrical substation.

Any necessary domestic water treatment plant, wastewater treatment plant and/or electrical substation are permitted uses. With exception to these uses, the business park area is subject to the use regulations for Zone M-1 as provided by the County of Imperial Land Use Ordinance. Zone M-1 provides for the establishment of wholesale commercial, storage, trucking, assembly type manufacturing and other similar light industrial uses.

The Land Use Ordinance includes standards to control the intensity and development of uses and to limit the performance of activities in the zone to levels permitting no objectionable or noxious influences such as smoke, noise, fumes, vibration, radiation, light or glare that might affect adjacent residential areas.

2.10.3 Development Standards

Table 2-11 identifies the development standards uses within the business park area of the Rancho Los Lagos Specific Plan area. The development standards for the potential wastewater treatment plant and/or electrical substation are to be specified within the approved conditional use permit.

Table 2-11
Business Park Development Standards

Standard	Business Park Uses
Minimum building/structure setback from road	20'
Minimum building/structure setback from lot line	15'
Minimum building/structure setback from adjacent structure	15'
Maximum building/structure height	2 stories/40'
Maximum Floor Area Ratio	0.45
Minimum off-street parking required	Pursuant to the County of Imperial Land Use Ordinance based on proposed use.
Additional regulations	Business Park development is also subject to any standard not specifically addressed by this Plan but regulated by the Land Use Ordinance.

2.10.4 Business Park Design Standards

The business park is subject to all applicable development standards provided in Zone M-1 of the County of Imperial Land Use Ordinance. The Site and Design Standards in Title 9 Division 3 shall also apply. The following standards are intended to supplement these standards. The design standards for a wastewater treatment plant and/or electrical substation are to be specified within the approved conditional use permit.

Site Planning Desirable site planning concepts for the business park include the following:

- ❖ Building entries should be emphasized and visible to pedestrians and the public parking areas;
- ❖ Service areas should be located at the sides and rear, and never the front, of buildings;
- ❖ Building articulation and parking lot setbacks should be varied to avoid long monotonous building façades and to create diversity.
- ❖ A minimum 10-foot landscape strip should be provided between parking areas and any portion of the structure, except where structures require vehicular access.
- ❖ Design site access and internal circulation in a straightforward manner which emphasizes safety and efficiency.
- ❖ Design the project's circulation system to reduce conflicts between vehicular and pedestrian traffic, combine circulation and access areas where possible, provide adequate maneuvering and stacking areas.

- ❖ Provide emergency vehicle access.
- ❖ Separate major truck circulation routes and public parking areas.
- ❖ The internal circulation system should not require vehicles to enter a public street in order to move from one area to another on the same site.

Parking and Loading

- ❖ The business park area should be a self-contained development capable of accommodating its own parking needs. The use of the public street for parking and staging of trucks is not allowed.
- ❖ The majority of parking areas should be located to the side or rear of buildings because limited parking in front is permitted.
- ❖ Adequately screen parking lots adjacent to and visible from public streets by using rolling earth berms, low screen walls, changes in elevation, landscaping or combinations thereof whenever possible.

Landscaping

- ❖ Landscaping plant materials should primarily consist of drought-tolerant plant species to conserve water demand.
- ❖ Landscaping should be used to define space by accenting building entries, parking lots and screening, loading areas, and creating buffers along roadways or any adjacent residential use.
- ❖ Trees should be located throughout parking areas and not simply at parking lot edges. Trees should be located in planters that are bounded on at least 3 sides by parking area paving.

Wall and Fencing

- ❖ The height of walls and fences should not exceed what is necessary for adequate screening and/or security.
- ❖ Where walls are used at property frontage, or screen walls are used to conceal storage and equipment areas, they should be designed to blend with the architecture of the adjacent buildings.
- ❖ Long expanses of fence or wall surfaces should be offset and architecturally designed to prevent monotony.

Screening

- ❖ Where screening is required, elements such as solid masonry walls, berms, and landscaping should be provided. Chain link fences are permitted except where clearly visible from the public right-of-way.
- ❖ All equipment should be screened or located out of public view, whether on the roof, side of a building, or on the ground level.
- ❖ All service areas should be screened so as to not be visible from the public right-of-way.
- ❖ Screening materials should be architecturally compatible with the architecture of the primary structure.

Architectural Design

- ❖ Building elevations should be of interesting visual character, especially where elevations are located on street frontage. Long, monotonous building elevations are discouraged in all publicly visible locations and should be avoided when fronting on public streets.
- ❖ Windows and primary building entries should be emphasized using architectural detail, landscaping, or other design techniques. The design and placement of doors and windows should be consistent throughout a structure and compatible with the architectural style of the structure.
- ❖ Sensitive combinations of colors and materials should be used produce diversity and enhance architectural forms.
- ❖ Rolling shutter doors located on the rear façade of the building are the preferred type of large loading doors.
- ❖ The roof design should be considered as a component of the overall architectural design theme.
- ❖ Undesirable design elements to be avoided include:
 - ◆ Highly reflective surfaces
 - ◆ Large, blank, unarticulated wall surfaces
 - ◆ Chain link fence and barbed wire
 - ◆ Unarticulated building façades
 - ◆ Materials requiring high maintenance such as stained wood, shingles or metal siding

Signs

The following standards are intended to supplement the County of Imperial regulations for signs in the M-1 zone as provided in Title 9, Division 4, Chapter 1 of the Land Use Ordinance:

- ❖ All signs should be highly compatible with the structure and site design relative to color, material, and placement.
- ❖ Monument signs are the preferred alternative for business identification.
- ❖ Where several tenants occupy the same site, individual wall-mounted signs are appropriate in combination with a monument sign identifying the development and the address.
- ❖ The use of backlit individually cut letter signs is strongly encouraged.
- ❖ Signs should be provided to direct vehicles to loading and receiving areas, visitor parking lots, and other special areas.

Lighting

- ❖ Lighting should be provided for the security and safety of onsite areas such as building entries, pedestrian pathways, and parking, loading, shipping, receiving, and outdoor work areas. The intensity of lighting should not exceed its function of providing safety and security.
- ❖ The design of light fixtures should be architecturally compatible with main buildings on site.
- ❖ Lighting fixtures should be shielded so that the emission of light is limited to the site on which the lighting is provided and fully shielded to below horizontal plane of fixture.

2.11 Illustrative Land Use Plan

The Rancho Los Lagos Specific Plan is designed to permit flexibility in the development and construction of various neighborhoods in the Plan area. This section demonstrates one such possible expression of detailed implementation that could be built. **Table 2-12** provides an illustrative land use summary. The Illustrative Plan depicted in **Figure 2-16** demonstrates an example of the implementation of land uses within the Plan area. This illustrative plan clearly respects and embodies the goals of the Specific Plan (refer to **Figure 2-1**).

Table 2-12
Illustrative Land Use Summary

Land Use	Gross Acres*	Total Dwelling Units	Gross Density (du/acre)
Low Density Residential			
7,200 SF	54.7	207	3.8
6,000 SF	62.0	293	4.7
5,000 SF	74.6	384	5.1
Low Density Subtotal	191.3	884	--
Medium Density Residential			
4,000 SF (Rear-load)	67.7	426	6.3
3,500 SF (Duplex)	38.4	321	8.4
4-unit Cluster (on 12,650 SF 4-lot pad)	25.6	244	9.5
Medium Density Subtotal	131.7	991	--
High Density Residential (Multi-Family)			
Condominiums	19.8	356	18.0
Multi-Family Mixed Use (Apartments)	15.0	360	24.0
Townhomes	27.7	300	10.8
High Density Subtotal	62.5	1,016	--
Active Adult or Gated Community Residential			
6,000 SF (detached)	28.2	147	5.2
5,000 SF (detached)	49.1	282	5.7
3,800 SF ¹	76.8	510	6.6
Active Adult or Gated Community Subtotal	154.1	939	--
Non-Residential Uses			
Commercial	2.5	--	--
Commercial Mixed Use (incl. Fire Station Site)	8.7		
Specialty Commercial at Community Park	(3 ac included in Community Park acreage)		
Elementary Schools	24.0	--	--
Business Park	96.7	--	--
Infrastructure Streets and Easements	87.2	--	--
Non Residential Uses Subtotal	219.1		
Parks (including lake)	70.7		
Executive Golf Course (including lakes)	139.0	--	--
Active Adult HOA Recreation Complex	11.7	--	--
Open Space Buffers	95.9	--	--
Subtotal Other Uses	317.3	--	--
Total Site Area	1,076	3,830	--

Source: EDAW, 2006.

¹ Residential dwelling units on 3,800 square foot lots can be attached or detached dwelling units.

*Includes internal residential streets R.O.W. area.



Source: P&D Consultants in conjunction with EDAW, 2007; 2008



P&D Consultants/EDAW

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County of Imperial

Figure 2-16
Illustrative Plan

Rancho Los Lagos

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